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RAMBLES AND SCRAMBLES

IN

NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICA.

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BY

EDWARD SULLIVAN, ESQ.

LONDON:
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1852.

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DEDICATED

TO

REAR-ADMIRAL

SIR CHARLES SULLIVAN, BART.

BY

HIS AFFECTIONATE SON,

EDWARD SULLIVAN.

CONTENTS.

PAGE

CHAPTER I.

FROM ENGLAND TO NEW YORK—HUDSON RIVER—WEST POINT. 9

CHAPTER II.

FROM WEST POINT TO NIAGARA AND TORONTO 26

CHAPTER III.

FROM TORONTO TO LA POINTE 48

CHAPTER IV.

LA POINTE TO STILL-WATER . . . . . .

CHAPTER V.

FROM ST. PAUL'S TO LAC-QUI-PARLE 82

CHAPTER VI.

LAC-QUI-PARLE—PRAIRIE TO BIG-STONE LAKE 101

CHAPTER VII.

PRAIRIE 117

CHAPTER VIII.

PRAIRIE — SOURCE OF ST. PETER'S RIVER — BEAR'S LODGE TO FORT SNELLING 139

CHAPTER IX.

ST. PAUL'S—PRAIRIE DU CHIEN—ST. LOUIS 164

CHAPTER X.

AMERICAN PEOPLE—DICKENS—MANNERS—BOOKS — STEAMERS— SLAVES 190

CHAPTER XI.

VOYAGE DOWN THE MISSISSIPPI TO NEW ORLEANS 212

PAGE

CHAPTER XII.

New Orleans—Embark for the Havana 231

CHAPTER XIII.

Slaves — Guines — Palm-trees — Winds — Moonlight — Buccaneers 248

CHAPTER XIV.

Bloodhounds — Garrote — Yacht — Bahamas — Flying Fish —Columbus 273

CHAPTER XV.

Barbadoes—Snakes—Tobago—Birds 298

CHAPTER XVI.

Georgetown —Essequibo—Cuyuni—Vampires 311

CHAPTER XVII.

Ascend the Essequibo—Victoria Regia—Poisons 330

CHAPTER XVIII.

Georgetown—Surinam—Paramaribo 353

CHAPTER XIX.

Surinam—Plantations—Shooting—Snakes—Balls 359

CHAPTER XX.

Voyage to Margaritta—New Barcelona—La Guayra . . 375

CHAPTER XXI.

Route to Caraccas—Valley of Chacao—Earthquakes . . 385

CHAPTER XXII.

Valley of Aragua—Tuy—Lake of Valencia 396

CHAPTER XXIII.

Valencia—Porto Cabello—Venezuela 406

CHAPTER XXIV.

Return to St. Vincent's—Caribs—Indians—Pigeon Island—Home 417

PREFACE.

THERE is no compulsion in book-reading: if a person is amused, he reads it on to the end; if bored, he lays it down. Such being the case, an apology in a Preface is unnecessary; it does not make a dry book less so, or a readable book more amusing. I shall therefore content myself with quoting the words of a writer of the olden time: "If I have done ill to write, let not others be so idle as to read."

Although "travels and notes," by giants of facetiæ and learning, have recorded almost everything amusing or instructive in America, over and over again; yet the "dwarf on the giant's shoulder" sees sometimes even further than the giant himself; and having taken my stand on the shoulders of their observation, I may

have been enabled to see some small objects that had escaped their notice. Moreover, giants do not in general go to the Prairies, as they require a good deal of creature comfort and nourishment, and the "hard doings" of those parts would hardly suit them. Besides, yachting in the West Indies is in its infancy, and the equinoctial forests of Guiana, and the unequalled scenery of the valleys of Chacao and the Aragua, and the lake of Valencia, although by no means "virgin scenes," yet have not been so often described by the pen of the tourist as the prairies and cities of North America.

I never had the slightest *penchant* for republics; I left England strongly biassed in favour of our government and institutions, and I returned with all my predilections strengthened by a comparison with those of our cousins in the West.

Yet although such was my feeling, there is no denying that many of their institutions are admirable, and far better suited to their habits and wants than any engrafted from the old country could possibly have been; and, on the other hand, most unprejudiced Americans admit that

though a republic such as they possess, organized as it was, carefully and deliberately, by the most clear-headed and enlightened men the country has ever produced, and aided by the enthusiastic support of the entire nation, may suit their peculiar tastes and ideas, yet that it does not at all follow that it would succeed in England, where it would most probably be the handiwork of hot-headed zealots, acting in opposition to a large proportion of the people, and where it must inevitably rise on the ruins of a constitution which centuries have identified with us, and which has become endeared to a large majority of the nation by the blood and talents of its best and noblest, through succeeding generations.

I had a strong prejudice against the American people, acquired by meeting very bad specimens on the Continent; but I have convinced myself it was unfounded; and I do not hesitate to say, that I met as agreeable women and as gentlemanly men in America as the world can produce.

I hope that any remarks I may have made galling to the *amour propre* of the American people, they will remember are entirely confined

to their national peculiarities of taste and habit (now, by the way, fast disappearing) which are common to all nations, and to some more than ourselves, and which they themselves ridicule quite as much as strangers.

In conclusion, I must observe, that I met with nothing but civility and hospitality during my stay in America; and I cannot imagine that any one who has a year at his disposal, and two or three hundred pounds in his pocket, can spend them with more profit and enjoyment than in the United States.

London,
Aug. 25, 1852.

RAMBLES AND SCRAMBLES

IN

NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICA.

CHAPTER I.

SAIL FROM ENGLAND TO WEST POINT.

In the early part of 1850 I had planned a trip to Spain and the East, and had been lingering in Paris, detained by the lovely spring weather, and the delight and enjoyment peculiar to that most delightful of all cities, when I received a letter from an old fellow-traveller and fellow-collegian, asking me to accompany him and his brother to the "Far West." It was an idea that just suited my fancy; so giving up my projected Spanish trip, (which I did with the less regret, as I had already been there,) I started for England, saw my companions, made arrangements, and in a few days we were at Liverpool.

We found that after a westerly gale of some weeks' duration, an easterly wind had sprung up, which the knowing ones said had every chance of lasting, so that having held lengthened consultations with some of the old "salts" of the place, we determined to

take our passage in a sailing vessel. We were the more induced to do this, as we were in no particular hurry. And I was rather curious to witness the nature of the accommodation and treatment provided for the thousands that were daily crossing the Atlantic. After visiting several very fine vessels in the docks, we took our berths in a wholesome looking craft, advertised to sail in two or three days.

As bad luck would have it, our friends the "salts" had been out in their reckoning, and we had no sooner got clear of the channel, than the wind shifted round dead in our teeth, and remained in that quarter most of the voyage. We had a very tedious one of forty-two days; the monotony broken only by the regular number of black-fish and "Mother Carey's chickens," so called I suppose because seen in *fowl* weather—(not mine). I never could quite understand the origin of the sailor's superstition, that these restless little birds are the ghosts of shipwrecked sailors; one would have imagined they had seen too much of storms, and of the briny deep, during their life-time, to wish to see more of it in a future state. It would be a much more pleasing fancy to imagine the spirit of the storm-tossed mariner tenanting the warm fat little body of some barn-door sparrow, that stuff themselves with the best of corn "fixings" all day, and always have "all night in" under the warm barn thatch, than to suppose them for ever passing an existence of perpetual motion and saturation, living on fish and sea-weed, the sport of every gale that sweeps across the Atlantic. The captain (a [redacted] perfect specimen of his class, with [redacted] of his nation in strong relief. He

was tall and handsome, with a care-worn anxious face, and looked as if he had not been in bed for the last month. He wore patent leather boots, kid gloves, and blew his nose with his fingers! He used remarkably strong language to his men, and to the emigrants, and administered what he called "very particular fits" with a rope's end to all indiscriminately. The first officer had been in the United States navy, but had been obliged to leave in consequence of a "difficulty," having shot his captain in a duel. There was no love lost between him and the captain, and I believe he would have shot the latter any day for half-a-crown; indeed, as these feelings of respect and affection to those above them were shared by all the crew, down to the smallest boy, one can understand that the duty was not always carried on with the utmost cordiality. We were well fed, and treated in every respect much better than I expected,—fresh meat, and fresh fish, milk and butter the whole voyage, thanks to an unlimited supply of American ice. The only drawback was a foul wind, and the misery and stench of the unfortunate emigrants, of whom there were 500 on board, men, women and children, mostly from the South of Ireland. They were huddled together, like a herd of pigs, in every stage of filth and sea-sickness. I believe no creatures but Irish could have existed in such confined air. They say you can cut the atmosphere on the lower deck of a line-of-battle-ship, after the ports have been closed for a few days, but I am confident you could not cut the atmosphere of an emigrant ship. Judging from the specimen I saw on board the *Isaac Wright*, there is no reason to suppose

Shakspeare was animated by any unsound prejudices against the Irish of his day when he makes Richard II. talk of them as

> "Those rough, rug-headed kerns,
> Which live like vermin, where no vermin else,
> But only they, have privilege to live."

Seeing that the Irish of our day are very little better, I cannot imagine how it was that they did not generate some fever. We were, however, lucky, for the vessel we had intended taking our passage in lost fifty by cholera and ship fever, whilst in ours out of the number who were ill only two or three died.

Happiness is said to be comparative, and to arise from the comparison of your present state with a former one, or with that of others, your equals; and certainly it would appear to be so; for one old lady I spoke to, said she never had been so comfortable in her life, and wished the voyage would last for ever! I could not divest myself of some uncomfortable ideas about fire; frequently I saw the emigrants smoking their short pipes on the heap of straw that formed their beds, and as this was only a few months after the burning of the *Ocean Monarch* the horror of a conflagration in the middle of the Atlantic, with a ship's company amounting to nearly 600 souls, used to intrude itself upon my mind rather forcibly. The emigrants are carried for from 3*l.* to 4*l.* a head, with tea, sugar, and biscuit, enough to keep body and soul together. The captain can flog them if he chooses, and not unfrequently does so.

I heard some curious facts about the variation of the compass, on the west coast of Ireland: the variation

which was formerly east is now 23 west; but has for the last few years been gradually working back to east. In the Mozambique Channel the compass is so unsteady that no reliance can be placed on it.

June 7th.—A mild kind of mutiny broke out amongst the emigrants, commencing of course with a general scrimmage amongst themselves, and ending by a violent onslaught on some of the second cabin passengers, who had tried to settle the dispute. By the captain's request, we got up our weapons and collected in a body on the poop, when he addressed the rioters: nothing more serious than a few broken heads was the result; frequently lives are lost in these emigrant riots.

June 11th.—Reached soundings on the great Banks of Newfoundland—on the look-out all day for icebergs, knowing, from the sudden decrease in the temperature, that we were in their neighbourhood. Blowing fresh, and fog so thick that you could not see twenty yards a-head of you. It is nasty work slashing across the Banks, with a ten-knot breeze, in a thick fog, during the month of May, as independently of icebergs, which would make short work of the largest vessel that ever swam, the banks at this season are thronged with vessels from all parts of the world, anchored on the Banks for the cod-fishing. It must be most miserable work remaining at anchor three or four months, kicking about, many hundred miles from shore; there is always a heavy sea, and generally a thick fog, and the nature of their employment prevents the men from having a dry stitch on; moreover, from lying right in the great highway between Europe and North America, they are not unfrequently

run down and swamped. The captain told me an instance of individual intrepidity which, if true, is wonderful. At the close of the revolutionary war a doctor at Portsmouth, Massachusetts, built a boat, and sailed in her quite alone to England, thence to the West Indies, South America, and home. Notwithstanding the captain's asseverations, I don't believe it.

The Banks of Newfoundland have been called the *bar* of the Great Oceanic River—the gulf stream. The gulf stream and the Arctic current meet on the great banks of Newfoundland; the Arctic current is three degrees colder than the surrounding ocean, and twelve degrees colder than the gulf stream: it is the evaporation arising from the mingling of streams of such different temperatures that causes the constant fogs on the great Banks of Newfoundland. Humboldt, who studied the direction and velocity of the gulf stream more than any other man living, or dead, has some very curious calculations on the subject. He says, "that a molecule of water, (supposing such a thing possible,) leaving the coast of Florida by the gulf stream, would perform a detour of 3800 leagues, and return to the same spot in about three years. The stream would take it in forty or fifty days from the coast of Florida to the banks of Newfoundland, progressing at the rate of two or three miles an hour. Eleven months more, and a portion of the same gulf stream would take it from the banks of Newfoundland to the African coast. Thirteen months more, and it would enter the Caribbean Sea; and in ten months [illegible] make the detour of that almost Medi-

terranean sea, and Mexican gulf, it would again join the Florida stream. Visionary as such calculations may appear, such are, without doubt, the slow but regular movements, which agitate the waters of the Atlantic.

June 22d.—An old emigrant died of cholera, and was consigned to the great deep, the dirty old doctor mumbling some part of the Burial Service, to the intense disgust of the Irish Roman Catholics. Not the smallest sign of feeling or even interest for their late companion was evinced. I never saw more sottish, and less intellectual countenances than those of the men, who appeared but a very few degrees removed from the brute. Many of the women, on the other hand, were quite beautiful, with a Spanish cast of feature, and showing in many instances a great deal of breeding. There were several, who if washed, and dressed, might have taken their place in any ball-room in England, so far as their appearance was concerned. It would seem as though our old emigrant had been our Jonah, for no sooner had he found his resting-place in the mighty deep, than the wind changed, and we managed to make a fair wind of it. The good ship Argo, that carried Jason through the Dardanelles and Bosphorus to the Black Sea, equalled in size a vessel of 200 tons; the miserable little Caraval, that bore Columbus to a new world, was only thirty, hardly equal to some of the Thames Yacht Club cutters. I don't exactly know the tonnage of the twelve-oared galley which bore Cæsar and his fortunes; but the gallant craft that carried us and our fortunes was about 1100 tons, and about as ugly, slow, though as comfortable a vessel as sails out of the city of New York. The more one thinks

over these voyages, made, when so little of navigation or seamanship was known, the more miraculous they appear. Fortune certainly favoured some of them in a most remarkable manner. Cabet, who was despatched to America with two vessels by Francis I. made the coast of that country in twenty-eight days from Havre, and returned in thirty-two days,—a voyage very hard to beat even in these days of "clippers," that are so fast they fly out of their copper, and have to "lay to" for the wind.

At length, after a reckless consumption of beer, sherry, corned beef, and patience, and a daily rubber at whist, which generally ended in the skipper's losing his temper and his money, on the evening of the 29th of June, the forty-second day from our leaving England, we made the highlands of Neversink; but though we stood in, and "fired freely," we did not get a pilot till the morning—not so "excruciatly smart" after all. The morning brought the pilot, and a sort of skeleton-looking tug, with all its works above deck, which made it look more like a daddy-long-legs, than our fat beetle-shaped tugs, that toil and puff up the Thames. However, it did its work well.

New York city is beautifully situated at the extremity of a spacious bay, which is about nine miles in length, and four in breadth; it is built on an island, formed by the Hudson, or North River on the west, and Long Island Sound on the East. The Narrows at the south end of the bay, called Hell-Gates, are two miles broad, and open out into the ocean. The passage up the Hudson, from the projecting point of Sandy Hook to the city, (a distance of twenty-five miles) is beautiful. The trees and grass

looked so green, the houses so white, the atmosphere so clear, and the ship and the emigrants so dirty, that one's anxiety to land, and disgust at all the annoying delays of quarantine, examination, &c., were very great. The Americans say that the Bay of New York is like the Bay of Naples, (Jenny Lind has decided the point by giving her vote in favour of the latter,) and the Hudson like the Bosphorus. I have never seen either the Bay of Naples or the Bosphorus, but cannot imagine there can be much similarity—all bays and straits are either like the Bosphorus or Bay of Naples. It certainly is very fine, but by no means equal to the Frith of Forth. The quays and warehouses are not at all equal to the amount of trade, and in that respect it contrasts unfavourably with Liverpool; and judging from the comparative number of vessels upon the Thames and upon the Hudson, I don't think the trade of the Hudson will eclipse that of London just yet; though one is told in the Eastern States it will do so very soon, and in the Western that it has done so already.

June 30th.—Landed, at 9 P.M., with a tooth-brush and collar—too late to clear the customs. Went to the Astor House, the largest hotel, I imagine, in the world. The hotels in America are among the most remarkable of their institutions, and that is saying a good deal. They are conducted on the French *table d'hôte* system; and though not exactly suited to English tastes, they are very well adapted to the wants of a travelling nation like the Americans, who know that from one end of the Union to the other they will always find a good hotel, with civility and comfort, if they don't mind three in a room, at one settled tariff.

The accounts one reads in all the works on America, from Basil Hall and Mrs. Trollope downwards, of the desperate haste of the Americans in consuming their meals, are not at present so applicable to the Eastern States, but are not in the least exaggerated as regards the Western. But still the "go-ahead" principle is so inherent a point of the Yankee character, that it is often visible even at the *table d'hôte* at New York and Boston, where, during the summer months, the diners are chiefly men travelling from place to place in search of amusement; and at a time when one would imagine that any desperate hurry in swallowing one's dinner, especially such excellent ones as are usually provided, would be a cause of great discomfort, you see dozens of men eating as if their very lives depended on consuming a certain amount in a given time, as Dickens has naïvely observed, "snapping up whole blocks of meat like young ravens."

Before and after dinner, the men assemble in the bar, or on the steps if in summer, and chew and drink bitters, and drink bitters and chew, till the bell rings, when they rush in, *sans cérémonie*, the majority mistrusting their neighbours' appetite and speed of consumption. Sometimes it is quite absurd to watch their nervous anxiety to get certain dishes; and you see a man with his plate full of different kinds of condiments, stretch out his arm to add the contents of another dish to his mess, as if afraid that if he did not take it then, it would be seized by some other cormorant. Certainly their concentration of energy at meals is undeniable; they never speak a word, unless to ask you for some dish, and if in your

innocence you address some common-place observation to your neighbour, instead of replying he only gobbles up his food the faster, and casts a furtive, alarmed glance at you, as if suspecting that you had some design in interfering with his gastronomic exertions. I never could quite understand the reason of the headlong speed in devouring their meals that is so remarkable amongst the Americans. It certainly is not to be accounted for from the reason they assign, viz. that the dinner-time being in the middle of their business hours, they eat as fast as they can in order to return to their work, for the crowd is always collected twenty minutes before the bell rings, and at least the same amount of time is wasted after the food has been bolted; so that there is no actual reason why they should not eat a little more leisurely, and with greater comfort to themselves and satisfaction to their friends. I expect it proceeds from the restless habits, become almost second nature, acquired by the excitement of continual competition and speculation, which prevents their enjoying the pleasures that are present from a continual looking forward to the future.

The ladies, both before and after dinner, which is usually at two o'clock, assemble in the large "elegantly furnished" (elegant is a great word in America) drawing-rooms, where they display their latest airs and newest fashions with great effect, talking to each other, or to any gentleman of their acquaintance, who prefers their company to that of his fellow men outside, or in playing, singing, and not unfrequently in getting up a dance. Newly-married people almost invariably spend their honey-moon in travel-

ling about from one city to another, and most of their time is passed in steamers, railway-cars, and hotels; not a comfortable idea. Another reason for the popularity of living at hotels, if it is not the effect of the cause, is the fact that American ladies dislike the occupations of housekeeping, paying butchers' bills, and weighing "members" of mutton, and "bosoms" of veal. This is especially the case in the eastern states, where the rights of women are freely canvassed, and their intellectual superiority to the lords of the creation openly professed,—where a knowledge of Homer, Euclid, &c. is considered of more moment than an acquaintance with Mrs. Glass or Mrs. Sweet's "Perfect Housekeeper."

I don't know any country where the truth of Macaulay's remark about hotel-keepers, "that England is the only country where mine host is your servant, and not your master," is more apparent than in America. At a French, German, or American hotel, you have your meals at stated times, or not at all. The landlord is the best dressed man in the room, sits at the head of his table, and serves out his dinner with the air of a rich man keeping open house to his friends, and not as if he was deriving any benefit from the entertainment. One thing to be said in favour of American hotels is, that they are all held by companies, with plenty of capital, and not by individuals, often with very little, so that no expense is spared in providing the best of everything; and as the amount of interest on the capital expended depends upon the popularity of the hotel, and the numbers of visitors, all idea of extortion or [redacted]nted.

On first landing in New York, the trees lining both sides of the streets, and the decided French style of dress adopted by the ladies and gentlemen, especially the latter, gives one the idea of being in a French town; but this illusion is soon dispelled by the hurried and eager faces of the walker, and the reckless driving of the vehicles. In Paris, pleasure and the enjoyment of the hour are visible on nearly all the countenances of the promenaders. In New York, business and money-seeking have stamped an anxious, eager, almost hungry look, by no means so agreeable, on the face of nearly every one one meets.

Thermometer 98° in the shade—rather a sudden change from the fogs and icebergs of the banks. We heard afterwards that we had a lucky time of it, in avoiding the icebergs. More than forty vessels were lost on the banks in the month of June. One field of floating ice extended more than one hundred miles. Ice in the eastern states is as cheap as dirt; not our dirty ditch ice, but Yankee "smile," as it is called —the purest, most transparent blocks of Wenham and Silver Lake ice. The effect of drinking "Sherry Cobblers," "Mint Juleps," "Brandy Smasher," "Gin Slings," and other exhilarating liquors, of an average temperature of 10° below zero, under a sun of 100° in the shade, although perfectly heavenly at the time, is to put one in a melting mood with a vengeance.

July 4th. — Glorious 4th of July, seventy-sixth anniversary of the declaration of Independence, and of the expulsion of the British. Kept awake all night by the explosion of crackers and pistols, announcing the advent of the day—dear to every true-born American, (that is, about one in every 1,000 of

the population of the Union.) As Sam Slick says, it is a glorious sight to see twenty millions of freemen, and five millions of slaves, a celebrating the anniversary of their freedom, their enlightenment, and their contempt of the British! All the militia of the State of New York, in all about 8,000 men, all volunteers, marched up Broadway. Most of them were foreigners, retaining as much as possible their national costumes. The Irish (Mitchell's Brigade) in green; the Scotch in kilts; the Austrian in the white uniform of their guards; and so on. Some very fine horses amongst the cavalry. Three companies in the old revolutionary uniforms (three-cornered hats, yellow-knee breeches, and top boots) were immensely cheered. Every boy from five to twenty years of age thinks it his duty to supply himself with a gun, pistol, or crackers, on this day, which he discharges in the face or over the shoulder of passers-by. It is considered a capital joke to tap a man on the shoulder, and when he turns round to discharge a pistol in his face, fire a gun over his shoulder, or pin a bunch of crackers to his coat-tails.

The city of New York is very well supplied with water from the Croton River, by the Croton Aqueduct: the consequence of water being so plentiful is that every sleeping-room, in most of the newer houses, has a bath-room with hot or cold water, and shower-baths laid on, which is a great comfort, and an example we should do well to follow, when possible.

Walked up the top of Broadway, three miles the extreme length, instead of seven, according to the inhabitants: went in the evening to the Broadway [redacted]formance,—saw a ballet which

would have astonished the oldest *habitués* at the opera, and would have been thought rather remarkable, to say nothing of miserable, dancing—even in England, where we are certainly not very squeamish; all this time, the figures supporting the candelabras, Hercules, Mercury, &c., were swathed in gauze trowsers and chemises! Nothing like consistency.

After remaining in New York for a few days, and consulting numerous authorities, both living and dead, as to the best route to take for the Prairies, and regarding our chance of sport there, we found that we must relinquish our original plan of starting from St. Louis, as in consequence of the extraordinary tide of overland emigration to California, horses and mules, and all the other Prairie necessities, had more than quadrupled in price, to say nothing of the panic existing in that portion of the Western States from the continued ravages of the cholera; and we determined to try the North West Prairies, and to reach the Mississippi by way of the Hudson River, Niagara, and the Lakes. The river boats on the Hudson and Connecticut rivers, are, I should imagine, as well suited to the navigation and to the habits of the people, as any that could be invented, much more so than any I have seen. The "Empire State," the one we travelled in, was a new boat, and the finest in the States, 370 feet long by 40 feet wide, and berths for 700 people; two funnels, one on each side, very far forward; four masts, with no sails, supporting the cabins (which are all on deck) by iron ropes. All the machinery is on deck; and the shafts and beam, working up and down, give it the appearance of a gigantic spider.

The Hudson River boats (very different from those on the western waters) are well commanded; the greatest method and regularity exist on board, and every word of command is regulated by a small bell. The "*gentlemen*" who manage the machinery, and feed the fire, far from being the "dirty, moist, unpleasant"-looking bodies that come dripping on deck in our vessels, are dandies, with black dress "*pants*," patent leather boots, and habiliments to match. They consume anthracite coal, which does not emit a tithe so much smoke. The Hudson boats are low pressure, the western ones high pressure. We ran up to West Point, fifty-two miles, against a ten-knot breeze, in three hours exactly. The scenery from New York to West Point is very fine—the Americans say finer than the Rhine; but except that there is water in both, there is no similarity from which to form a comparison. The first twenty-five miles, the river narrows from five to two miles. It is a splendid deep stream, and rushes into the ocean without any of the deltas, or mud banks, which generally disfigure the mouths of rivers. Thinking of it now—having seen the Mississippi, the Ohio, Missouri, and the mighty rivers of South America—I am inclined to give it the palm over all but the Upper Mississippi. For the first ten miles from the town, the banks are studded with the snuggest little snow-white wooden cottages, with the brightest green verandahs and window shutters, nestled in the glens and nooks of a most luxuriant forest. (It is in one of these glens that the scene of Rip Van Winkle's dream is laid.) Above the Palisades (a rocky cliff from 300 to 500 feet high) [illegible]ding about twenty miles, and clothed

to the very edge of the stream with splendid trees), the river narrows to less than half a mile; both banks are mountainous, and from 800 to 1,000 feet high. It is here that the Catskill mountains, a spur of the Alleghany range, cross the Hudson. The scenery about this spot reminded me of Loch Long, and slightly of the Lake of Thun. The splendid weather—such a clear sunshine as you hardly ever see in England—the fresh green of the grass (almost the first we had seen since landing), the varied hues of the dense foliage—fir, oaks, beech, &c.,—the immense flocks of rooks, that I could almost fancy belonged to the paternal rookery,—all contributed to render the afternoon, with its train of ideas, one of the most pleasurable I ever passed.

CHAPTER II.

FROM WEST POINT TO NIAGARA AND TORONTO.

WE arrived at West Point at nine o'clock. Found the hotel crowded. Two in a bed is what the Americans call a double-bedded room; and I heard an amusing story of one Yankee, who arriving at a crowded hotel, was told by the landlord that there was only one place in the hotel to sleep in, and that in a double-bedded room, "but, by-the-bye," said the landlord, "it is occupied by a Russian, and perhaps you would not like to sleep with a Russian." "I guess I should," returned the American. "I have slept with most of God's critturs, but never with a Russian—I swear I should like to sleep with a Russian."

It being Sunday, we went to the church parade of the cadets. West Point is the Woolwich of America, and the Americans maintain it is the finest military school in the world. I believe it is very good, and very strict—no holidays, no pocket-money—would not suit affectionate mothers in England. Their light blue and grey uniform is not very handsome, and being no soldier myself, I could give no opinion as to the manœuvres or appearance of the future defenders of the republic. Started for Albany; got out short of that, and landed at Hudson city, where we took the cars to Boston, passing through some [redacted] enough cleared to make it more

picturesque, and crossing some magnificent looking salmon-rivers, though I could not find out on inquiry that there were any salmon in them. Went to the Revere House, said to be the best kept hotel in the Union. It was full of very fierce-looking, moustached and bearded militia, New Yorkers, come to spend the 4th July with their brothers in arms at Boston. I expect Bacchus was more honoured than mighty Mars by the meeting of two such distinguished corps; and I would back the Boston and New York warriors to consume more liquor in a given time than any band of invincibles of these *degenerate* days. It is very much the fashion for Citizens, Freemasons, Odd Fellows, Freemen, and other corporate bodies, to go and spend a week or so with similar societies in the neighbouring cities: it is a practice attended, I think, with some few advantages; it tends to keep up a kindly feeling of good-will between the cities, and is a godsend to all the hotels and oyster-shops.

Boston is a clean, neat, puritanical-looking little town, where it is forbidden to smoke in the streets, drink, or sell liquors—laws which it would break the hearts of the Pilgrim Fathers, their founders, to see more honoured in the breach than in the observance. It is curious that in the "land of liberty" so many absurd and tyrannical old laws should be retained, and still not be treated as dead letters. Walking in Boston, *par excellence* the freest city in the Union, it is very startling to be brought up by a policeman, and told to put your cigar out. Many of the social and moral offences which with us are either cases of pecuniary recompense, or are not at all recognised by the law, are in Boston liable to be treated with the

greatest severity. Swearing, drinking, smoking in the streets, are all finable offences; and the punishment for depriving a citizen of his worldly goods by forgery is not half so severe as that for depriving him of the affection of his wife, which is, or used to be, death.

Boston was one of the earliest cities founded by the Pilgrim Fathers of the seventeenth century, and it still in some measure retains the impress of their stern, unworldly character. I think it must be confessed that our admiration for the fortitude and lofty principle of these men, who, to secure a liberty of conscience which they professed not to be able to enjoy in England, left all they had, or at least all they could not carry with them, and crossed the great Atlantic to find a refuge on the bleak shores of New England, sustains no inconsiderable diminution, when we consider that, so far from displaying any of that toleration which they demanded for themselves towards those who differed from them in any whit on religious matters, they would not admit any to the rights or advantages of citizenship who had not been formally baptized into their communion; and moreover, their cruelty and persecution exercised against the Quakers and some other dissenting bodies, was of the most unmitigated nature, far exceeding any experienced by the *martyred* (?) nonconformists of Mr. Macaulay. It is strange that in all arguments and discussions on religious subjects, where men are supposed to be animated by the purest motives, and consequently every allowance should be made for the strength of their convictions, charity, that essence of all Christian virtues, the "bond of perfectness," is

invariably dropped over at the beginning, as an utterly useless appendage; and whether we look at the haughty exacting persecution of the Roman Catholic prelates of Queen Mary, or the equally bitter persecutions of the canting Puritans of Cromwell, glorying in that pride that aped humility, we find them all animated by the same spirit of utterly uncharitable intolerance towards those who differed from them.

The atmosphere at Boston is said to be the clearest and driest in the world. The alternations of heat and cold are sudden and very trying. I have frequently known the thermometer fall from 80 to 40 in less than half-an-hour, and very likely this depression in the atmosphere is accompanied by a piercing wind. The consequence is that pulmonary complaints are common and very fatal; more people are said to die annually of consumption at Boston, than of yellow fever at New Orleans.

The Boston ladies are excessively pretty and fascinating, and rather more *embonpoint* than their New York rivals, and you often meet with a complexion so transparent as to be quite startling. From the intense cold of the winter they very seldom leave their houses (which are heated with stoves) for months together; and to this circumstance I imagine a good deal of their delicate interesting appearance is to be attributed. There is a great difference between the Boston and New York ladies. The former are inclined to be *blue*—attend anatomical lectures and dissections—prefer a new theory of geology or religion to a new fashion of dress or crochet-work. The New York ladies, on the contrary, have no

tendency to blue-stockingism, and quite dread the character, wishing to be supposed capable of no more serious thought than that involved in the last new polka or the last wedding, and professing that there is nothing worth living for but balls and operas! The fair denizens of both cities, however, agree to dress in very good taste and style, and make the most of that fleeting beauty which is so fascinating for a time, but which so soon passes away. They adopt the French fashions completely, but they *Americanize* them rather too much, sometimes giving them the appearance of being *overdressed*—a mistake a French woman never makes—and the habit of wearing short sleeves (or rather no sleeves at all, but only a shoulder strap,) at an early dinner, at two o'clock, is very unbecoming.

Directly a young lady leaves school at fourteen or fifteen, she "comes out," and is then a responsible agent, giving and accepting invitations to balls, &c. entirely on her own hook, without consulting mamma, who is only employed to find the *ready*. It is considered quite correct for a *nice* young man to call and take a young lady out for a walk, or to the theatre, or to a ball, without any *chaperone*. The young ladies marry very young, often at fifteen or sixteen, and fade almost before they bloom; at three-and-twenty they look three-and-thirty, and get very spare. A lady however handsome, once married, loses her place in society; very little attention is paid her; all is immediately transferred to the unmarried "angels;" however it is not so much the case as it used to be. One charming old lady of about sixty told me that I was the only young man who had

honoured her with ten minutes' conversation for the last ten years.

The society of Boston is quite literary; as one young lady told me afterwards in the West country,—"In Boston we have an aristocracy of soul; in New York they have an aristocracy of money; in England of blood:—which is most worthy of an enlightened country?" The same young lady (a *smart* one and no mistake) told me that Boston was the only place in the world where "the feast of reason could be enjoyed in perfection, combined with the proper amount of flow of soul." In New York and Paris, for instance, you can enjoy the flow of soul—in Cambridge or Oxford the feast of reason, (is that all you know of it? thought I,) but Boston is the only true combination of the two. The young ladies in the Northern and Eastern States have an extraordinary fashion of visiting every corpse within reach. A gentleman I met, who resided at Boston, told me that his father-in-law had died and been laid out, when the next day he was surprised at the arrival of ten or fifteen young ladies at the door, and on asking their business they said: "Oh! they only wanted to see the body;" and when they had gone many more came. The American ladies are generally possessed with the idea of the great robustness of the English, and imagine that almost every Englishwoman hunts, shoots, and plays at skittles, a striking contrast to their own fair dames, who are occasionally so die-away, and lackadaisical that they would not walk a hundred yards to pull their husbands or lovers out of the water. A case of the kind really occurred at Boston quite lately, when a lady-like Pelham stood still and screamed for

assistance, when with the slightest exertion she might have saved her husband a very lengthened immersion.

There being no Established Church in America dissent and unbelief flourish in their rankest growth, and Boston takes the lead in the manufacture of new religions. Owing to the influence Dr. Channing exercised at Boston, the Unitarians compose a large majority; but as in arithmetic unity is next to nothing, so in religion the belief of a Unitarian is very close to no belief at all. A new sect of Unitarians, calling themselves Transcendentalists, and embracing a majority of Unitarians, are nothing more nor less than Free-thinkers. They find it very easy, after reasoning themselves with a great deal of labour into a disbelief in the existence of Two Persons of the Trinity, to extend the doubt to the Third Person. The ease with which the Abbé Siéyes promulgated fresh constitutions is a joke to the celerity with which the popular preachers of Boston propound fresh religions. They are quite above following in the old paths of Christianity, and unless they have some new idea for their audience every Sunday their popularity would soon be on the wane.

The Roman Catholic is the next most powerful sect—then Baptists, &c., the Episcopalian coming fifth or sixth. In America, the Baptist, Unitarian, and Episcopalian congregations appear to be composed equal'y of all classes of the community, and the preponderance of any one class is not remarked. I am quite convinced from what I have seen in America that an Established Church is the only, certainly the best means of ensuring the proper amount of order and decency in the conduct of Divine service.

The length to which this religious excitement sometimes carries its professors is most absurd. Two years ago, a Mr. Millar appeared, who said that he had had a revelation that the end of the world was at hand, and that on the 15th of the next month, the pick of the faithful would be taken up into heaven: many believed, and supplied themselves with ascension clothes, and settled their worldly affairs, though it is whispered that some lent the money they had raised by the sale of their goods, at a good per cent. per annum. The young ladies had their ascension clothes made long, that their flight might be conducted with all due regard to decorum, and that they might not display too much ankle to the miserable sinners upon earth. One young lady had her sofa placed near the window, to avoid the chance of deranging her hair, by going through the ceiling. At length the 15th arrived, the faithful waited in their ascension clothes for the glorious moment, till their regular tea hour, when getting tired and hungry, it was determined to ask an explanation of Mr. Millar, when, alas! it was discovered that he had departed—not into heaven, but by the railroad, with a lady, who, being fully convinced that her husband and family were going to ascend on that day, and feeling herself not quite worthy such a sudden elevation, thought it no wrong to take unto herself a fresh spouse.

I left my letters of introduction, and walked to Bunker's-hill monument, a hideous concern. I also went to see the scene of Dr. Parkman's murder. Dr. Webster must have been a "hard case;" he put the body of the murdered man, in two pieces, in two

wells, under his lecture table, and lectured over it to his pupils twice! His extraordinary composure before and during his execution was owing to the effect of opium, of which he took large quantities; he was executed without the knowledge of his wife and daughters, who did not hear of it till all was over, although they knew the execution was to take place. I think it was a humane proceeding, as the agony of watching the clock, and knowing that a husband and father is being strangled must be greater than the mere shock of hearing that he is dead. He was a hardened villain, and but for his position in society, and the interest exerted in his favour, he would have been hung months before.

We heard to-day of the death of General Taylor, —old Zack, as he was familiarly called. He was an illiterate rough old soldier, and but for the battle of Buena Vista (when he was in reality beaten, his troops running like riggers, when they were intercepted by the Mexicans, who had got to their rear, and being caught in a *cul-de-sac* were obliged to fight, whether they would or no, and were lucky enough to hold their own) he would never have been President. It is a well-known political axiom in the States, that they never elect a first-rate man to the presidency; they prefer a third or fourth-rate man; and the last in the field and least known generally has the best chance of election. Neither Tyler nor Polk had been heard of, till a month before they were elected; one beat Clay and the other beat Webster, the two cleverest men in the country.

We went to Nahant, a very remarkable promontory of rock that juts out into the ocean, being nearly

an island—quite so I believe at high water—and resembles the Rock of Gibraltar on a small scale. It is the favourite resort of the sea serpent, and it would be treason to doubt its existence at Nahant. I never did.

We took the train to Springfield and on to Albany, passing through the Shaker village. The Shakers are a sect, I believe, peculiar to this side of the Atlantic, somewhat resembling the Plymouth brethren; believing that the earth is too thickly populated, (they ought to pay a visit to the Western Wilderness,) they take a vow of perpetual celibacy, and reside *en socialiste*, having everything in common; their worship consists in dancing in a meeting-house and chaunting the identical air that had such a fatal effect on the aged cow; they dress themselves in a blue smock frock, fastened round the neck. Their dress and houses are remarkable for their excessive cleanliness, and altogether they are a harmless set. It is whispered by those who know them best, that their rules are more strict to the uninitiated than to the true believer, and that when once admitted more than half the bitterness is past. However, *Honi soit qui mal y pense.* Their principle is, that there is sin enough in the world to keep it peopled without the true believers troubling themselves about such trifling matters!

Ever since the days of Mrs. Hutchinson in 1635, when the State of Massachusetts was within an ace of dissolution on the subject of the social superiority of the female over the male portion of creation, and the obligation of the community to respect the votes of the former as much as those of the latter, the ladies

of the North Eastern States have been continually agitating in the same direction, and various public and domestic *fracas* have been the result. Whilst I was at Springfield the walls were placarded with bills announcing that a public meeting of the ladies would be held that evening, to take into consideration "*the rights of women in general*, but their *matrimonial rights in particular!*" The former consist in the right of voting and of holding seats in the legislative assembly; the latter tends to the legalization of a privilege which most of them exercise, viz. of keeping exclusive possession of the money bag, and of usurping the *pettiloons* at pleasure. What motions were made and what resolutions adopted I never heard; perhaps the gallant though abortive attempt of Mrs. Bloomer was the result of that very meeting.

From Albany we proceeded through Troy to Saratoga, the Cheltenham of America. The Troy on the Hudson is the new one, I imagine, which Æneas predicted would arise in a foreign land, and exceed the Scamandrian Troy in splendour. As the actual existence of old Troy is absolutely doubted by learned men, and as the American Troy certainly does exist, and is built of brick, and has glass windows, and moreover, has a railroad running down the main street, I have no doubt if Æneas could arise, he would be content with the completion of his ancient prophecy.

I had no opportunity of judging of the beauty of the modern Trojan ladies, whether it equals that of

"Troy's proud dames, whose dresses sweep the ground,"

that Homer mentions.

Ancient Troy was noted for wooden (rocking?) horses. Modern Troy is famous for its wooden rocking-chairs! *Sic transit*, &c. Saratoga, the Cheltenham of America,—though from the vulgarisms one sees perpetrated there it reminded one more of Ramsgate in August,—is the paradise of snobs, and is, without exception, the most odious place I ever spent twenty-four hours in. It is famous for some mineral springs, and crowded during three or four months of the year with New York and Boston shop-keepers, and snobs, dressed within an inch of their lives; women in excess of Parisian fashion with short sleeves, men in extra Newmarket and bad Parisian style, crammed to the number of three and four thousand in five or six large hotels, breakfasting together, dining together at two o'clock, smirking and flirting the whole time. The men smoke all day, swinging in rocking chairs, and squirting tobacco juice between their feet, or over their neighbours' shoulders. The ladies promenade before them, talking loud, and making eyes—altogether it is the most forced and least natural state of society I ever saw. It is the quintessence of snobbism, beating Ramsgate or Margate in August. In the latter places the cockneys have no pretence whatever, but eat shrimps out of strawberry pottles, and bury themselves in the sand, because they really enjoy it, and don't care sixpence what other people think of them; whereas at Saratoga, if a lady were to go to dinner in a morning dress, or a gentleman walk about in a shooting jacket, public opinion would be so strong against them, that their friends, if they had any, would have to cut them. The hurry of public

meals (which I have before, and in common with every English traveller, already commented upon) was more remarkable here amongst a people who had no object whatever to hurry for, and whose only pursuit was pleasure, than even at New York. The ladies, being the weaker party, are seated first, when at the ringing of a small bell, the men, to the number of three or four hundred, rush in, pushing and scrambling for seats; those who are not active or energetic enough to secure them having to wait for the next dinner. When the tables are filled, and the work of carnage has commenced, you see unfortunate individuals, unwilling to leave the scene of their defeat, walking round the tables, as the French cuirassiers did the British squares at Waterloo, trying to discover a vulnerable point where to effect an entrance.

It was here we saw the paper containing the announcement of Sir Robert Peel's death; it seemed to create some sensation; but the other, and only other portion of European news, the account of Miss Lawrence's presentation at court, and dress on the occasion, created much more. The death of Sir Robert Peel and old Zack, each the man in whom their country placed the greatest confidence, and at whose death alarmists predicted frightful calamities, so close together, is somewhat singular. In England Sir Robert Peel's death was to be immediately followed by a Protectionist ministry, and consequent resumption of protective policy, manufacturing riots, and the spread of republican principles. In America General Taylor was said to be the only man who could heal or even cement the breach between north

and south, on the extension of the Slavery question; and at his death a separation of the Union was deemed inevitable. Hitherto the croakers have been disappointed. America, since the death of "Old Zack," and during the Presidency of Mr. Fillimore, has passed through by far the most dangerous agitations she has known since the Revolution; and far from losing anything by the death of the late President, they have discovered that it was a most fortunate thing for the country, for that his *obstinacy* (in his lifetime they called it, his *admirable* firmness) would have prevented all those compromises by which alone his successor has been enabled to reconcile the two parties.

We proceeded by rail to Shenectady, crossing a long, rickety, wooden bridge, over the junction of the Hudson and the Mohawk rivers:—last week a train with sixty passengers fell through; most of them were drowned: the waters very much swollen, and rushing along at the rate of ten or twelve miles an hour, did not add to the pleasure of the transit. From Shenectady we proceeded by rail, along the banks of the Mohawk, to a town called Palestine. The Mohawk is a very fine, rapid, rocky river, totally unnavigable even for small boats, except at Ferry's. It was much swollen, and had overflowed its banks for a mile on either side, and done incalculable damage to the maize and corn, of which immense quantities are grown in the valley of the Mohawk. The Mohawks, once the most powerful of all the Red men, are now totally extinct.

In the railway car I fell into conversation with a Boston shop-keeper: he talked very loud about lite-

rature in general, and at last, bringing out a small well-thumbed "Burke on the Sublime," asked if it was not a splendid book, and how proud the English ought to be of the Elizabethan age, that produced in the same era a Bacon and a Burke:—his reading had done him some good anyhow!

From Palestine we crossed the foaming flood, curling like the mane of a chestnut steed, to Canajahira, (all the Indian names are pretty,) and so on to Sharon, a much prettier place than Saratoga, and famous for sulphur springs, which are good for scorbutic complaints. The water tastes like bad eggs and gun-washings, and the smell of it can be winded a mile off, which circumstance gave rise to the remark of an elderly gentleman I met at Niagara, that when he went to Sharon, he smelt brimstone, but when he got his bill at the hotel, he smelt hell. The latter is a very common expression with Americans when anything happens they do not like, and is not to be judged of, as such a remark would be in England: I once, but only once, heard it proceed from the honeyed lips of a fair and lovely young lady, but then it was lisped so softly and so prettily, that the most particular could hardly have had heart to object to it. We walked to visit Cherry Valley, distant about nine miles, and from whence there is a beautiful view of the valley of the Mohawk, and part of the Hudson. The immense masses of wood, and the tiny appearance of the clearings in this, the most thickly populated state of the Union, impressed me with the idea of the millions the continent is destined to support, more than anything else I saw in America. We started back again in the

morning, through Canajahira and Palestine, to Utica, the birth-place of Cato, or rather, I believe, the scene of his death. If the great stoic could rise from his grave and visit the neighbouring abodes of fashion and luxury, Saratoga and Sharon, I "calculate" he would think an "Oppian law" more necessary now than even when Hannibal was approaching the gates of Rome.

The town of Utica is built on rock-salt, which the river has washed away till it has endangered the safety of the town, many buildings having already fallen. We took a carriage and pair, to visit Trenton Falls, distant fifteen miles; they are indeed some of the finest I ever saw, and are second only to Niagara, in the world. A river, with a bulk of water equal to the Thames at Richmond, rushes through a gorge or rather trough of rock, varying from two to three hundred feet high, for a distance of about three quarters of a mile; during its passage through this gorge, there are three falls, each about fifty feet high: in many places the river is compressed into a trough not ten feet broad, but of unfathomable depth. The river was in a heavy flood, and of a deep porter colour, (heavy wet!) The regular pathway along the side of the gulley was covered by the flood; and we scrambled along the face of the bank, or cliff above it; no man had ever been there before, and I should advise him never to try it, for the water rushes through the gorge beneath at such a pace, that the strongest head would get giddy with one glimpse, and our thoughts were so engrossed with the pleasant idea of slipping, that any admiration of the scene was impossible. It was the excitement of

the moment which led us to attempt it, and we would willingly have returned if we could; but once started, we had no choice but to go on, or over; we were not sorry to get to the end of it, and I don't think we should be easily induced to attempt such an exploit again.

On by train next morning to Buffalo, the most rising city in the north-west. All the corn that is exported from America has to pursue one of three routes; either down the Mississippi, to New Orleans; through the lakes to Buffalo, thence by canal to New York; or through Buffalo, by the Welland Canal, to Lake Ontario, and thence down the St. Lawrence. Thus, at least one half of the corn shipped to Europe passes through Buffalo. It is an unhealthy town, but not badly laid out, and the quickness of its growth must cover all defects. We steamed from thence on Lake Erie, down to Niagara, (a bad imitation of the Indian name, Oniawgara, the *Thunder of Waters;*) we took up our quarters on the Canada side, immediately facing the American, and nearly facing the Horse-shoe Fall. People are generally disappointed with the first sight of Niagara. I don't think I was—in some respects it was quite what I had expected, and still quite different.

To attempt a description of this oft-described wonder, would be superfluous; indeed all description fails to give the slightest idea of the grandeur of the Horse-shoe Falls; nothing but actual seeing and hearing can impress upon the imagination the mysterious bewilderment caused by the thundering roar of the enormous body of falling water. As I heard a young lady say, "Well now! that does beat all

jumps, and no mistake!" The thunder of the falls, that with a favourable wind is heard twenty miles off, the clouds of spray, looking at a distance like some enormous phantom, illuminated by rainbows of the gaudiest hues, and rising like an eternal incense to its great Creator,—the pure white of the foam clearly visible through the smooth upper layer of dazzling green, as it hurries down a mile of rapids, and then, gradually abating its speed, rolls majestically over a fall of 150 feet, the milky (literally) whiteness of the river at the bottom, as it seethes round the huge cauldron, and then flows slowly away, as if stunned and confused, and glad to escape, gradually quickening its pace, as if with recovered animation,—form a *tout ensemble* that *no* imagination can picture, and *no* description exaggerate. It is as impossible to describe Niagara as to describe an avalanche, or anything else where you have to give the idea of *noise* and *motion* besides its other glories.

The enormous bulk of water and width of the falls, and the large scale of the surrounding scenery, detract at first sight from the apparent height and size altogether, but it grows upon one, and after being absent from it for a few days and returning to it, you realize its magnitude, and it becomes quite fascinating. Shakspeare's splendid description of Dover Cliff continually recurred to my mind—

> "How fearful
> And dizzy 'tis to cast one's eyes so low!
> The crows and choughs that wing the midway air
> Show scarce as gross as beetles," &c.

I am never giddy on precipices, and even whilst chamois hunting in Switzerland, where I had to cross

the most ticklish passes, never felt disposed to try an aeronautic leap; but sitting with my feet dangling from the Table Rock, and gazing into the abyss below, I more than once, like Lear, felt,—

> "I'll look no more,
> Lest my brain turn, and the deficient sight
> Topple down headlong."

We took a guide, and went under the Falls two hundred and fifty yards, and reached Termination Rock, the Ultima Thule, which no living wight ever has or will pass. Going under the Falls is a foolish undertaking, as you get soaked, and cold, and stunned, and see nothing whatever, having to move with your face to the cliff and back to the Falls, on account of the spray and whirlwind. It is not in the least dangerous, and, after Trenton, was mere child's-play. Votive offerings of pipes and tomahawks, left by the Indians for the Manitou, or Great Spirit of the Falls, are frequently found in the neighbourhood. The Americans are a practical people, and have small respect for the *genius loci* of any place—Niagara amongst the number. The river above the Falls on the American side is studded with all kinds of factories, which are daily increasing. It would seem as though they were acting on Sam Slick's hint, given some years back: "The whole world might be stumped to produce such a factory stand as Niagara. What a sight of machinery it would hold!" The idea of the Yankee is not so bad, who, on seeing Vesuvius, said, "Well now! it is a tarnation big fire, and no mistake; but I opine we have a small water-power that would souse it in rather less than no time —and that's a fact!"

The stranger need never be ennuyéd for want of society here; for at the hotel, as elsewhere, there is a public room where the ladies sit, "got up" in their gayest attire, and which any gentleman is allowed to enter. By sitting next her at table, I became acquainted with a young lady from Boston, about fourteen, but with the manners of a matron of forty: she told me the *Bosting* ladies were very literary, and that she herself knew mathematics, Greek, and *several* of the Latin languages. Strictly speaking, she was right, if she meant languages derived from the Latin; but I don't fancy she intended it in that sense.

During my fortnight's stay at Niagara, we drove one Sunday to hear service at the village of Tuscarora Indians, eight miles distant. They were a gipsy-looking lot of scoundrels, especially the men. The squaws retained more of their national costume and appearance than the men, and behaved very decently during service. The men slept and snored the whole time. They lead a quiet kind of life; the men cultivating a little corn, and the women making mocassins and other curiosities, which command a ready sale. The clergyman preached in English, every sentence being translated by an old Indian; but as the whole discourse was made up of prophecies and abstruse quotations, without any practical advice or direction, I think the amount understood must have been very small.

We visited Toronto, per steam — a remarkably well laid-out town—broad streets, and good shops—rather larger than Buffalo. The original Indian name of Toronto was changed some years back for

the less euphonious one of Little York; but it has since become the general opinion that the Indian name was the prettiest, and it is now universally adopted. Lord Elgin has made it the seat of government instead of Montreal, where he was treated so badly. He is not popular: I expect he is too much of a gentleman for his Houses of Assembly, and he is rather friendly to the French annexationists. For some days before the opening of the House of Representatives at Montreal, after passing the bill for the indemnification of the rioters in the last revolt, not an egg was to be bought for love or money —all bought up to pelt him on his return.

During a fortnight's residence at Niagara, one Yankee steamer was blown up on Lake Erie, with a hundred and fifty passengers; every soul lost but two, who escaped by diving under the sinking mass of passengers, (who stuck to each other like frog-spawn,) and swimming half a mile to shore. One of the two had lost mother, wife, and five children, so had to begin life quite afresh. Another steamer burst her boiler, killing eight outright; other ten were drowned, and thirty were boiled, scalded, and skinned, in such a way they were not expected to survive. Another steamer ran on a rock in Niagara river, and sank in twenty feet water; her passengers were saved by another steamer. Tremendous fires, that consume three or four square miles of buildings, as at Philadelphia, three or four hundred lives, or three or four millions sterling, are mentioned quite as matters of fact in American papers, and do not call for any larger type or "latest particulars" from the editor. Inquests on persons

killed by accident, (even when notoriously caused by gross neglect,) or the responsibility of the directors and proprietors of the public means of conveyance, are quite unknown. These accidents I have mentioned were predicted last year at Buffalo: the season had been bad, and the proprietors of the vessels said they could not afford to examine and replace the worn-out boilers. A fellow-traveller told me that a few days before, on leaving the steamer, he had missed some portion of his luggage, and on giving the porter a little of his mind for his carelessness, he raised his voice rather higher than was necessary, for he heard a moustached American say to a milk-and-water-looking young lady, "Ain't you alarmed, miss, at the roar of the British lion?" "No, sir," said she, looking hard at my friend, "for I hear that when the animal is the most afraid, he roars the loudest." Smart young woman, that, sir—make a good wife, I should think.

CHAPTER III.

FROM TORONTO TO LA POINTE.

FROM Toronto we went by sea to Hamilton, on Lake Ontario, a nice, clean, well laid-out town, and thence in the evening proceeded by stage to Woodstock. Woodstock is by far the most agreeable part of Upper Canada that I saw, and nearly all the families of any standing reside in the neighbourhood. The gentry keep up the old English fashions and games—cricket, steeple-chases, &c.; but as they also imitate old country tastes by giving grand dinners, and drinking champagne, they frequently find the pace too good for them, and have to remove to some less jovial neighbourhood.

After going out shooting,—a very green trick to perform in Canada during the summer,—and having a narrow escape of being devoured by mosquitoes, my head and hands swelling up to a monstrous size, I went on to London, the capital of the western division of Upper Canada. It is situated on the banks of the Thames, and not very far from Oxford, which is on the Isis. The road was excessively pretty, and reminded me much of some of the English counties. The country is cleared for some distance back on both sides of the road from Hamilton to London. There are three ways of clearing in Canada, all equally disfiguring to the country; the

first is by setting fire to the forest, and trusting to Providence to extinguish it,—(these fires frequently extend two or three hundred miles);—the second method is by "ringing," or dividing the bark all round, which causes the trees to die immediately; the third is by cutting them down altogether: this latter operation is performed in winter, when the snow is four or five feet deep, and a stump of a corresponding height is left.

I don't know which of these three methods gives the country the most desolate and untidy appearance,—whether the scorched and blackened tracks that have been burned—the spectral forests that have been ringed, which, leafless, but with no other signs of decay, make one almost fancy they had been blasted by the breath of some destroying angel, rather than by the hand of man—or the four or five feet high stumps of those that had been cut down. There is hardly a green field in Upper Canada that has not numbers of the latter. London, like all the towns in this part of the country, is a clean wholesome looking town, chiefly built of wood, and not very progressive. A regiment of infantry and a battery of artillery are stationed here, and a short time before my visit rather an absurd incident occurred. Lord Elgin being expected, the radicals had made a triumphal arch to welcome him at the entrance of the town; but whilst they went forward a few miles to meet him and escort him in triumph, the opposite party pulled it down, so that the Governor General drove *over* instead of *under* it.

The commanding officer of artillery had been requested to defend the arch, but not being a very

keen politician, or perhaps having rather a tendency the other way, he did not feel inclined to comply.

After remaining a night at London, I started in a gig for Port Talbot on Lake Erie, and, more from good luck than good management, I arrived there about the middle of the day. The roads throughout the whole distance were "corduroy," or planked—the latter, if at all out of repair, is quite as disagreeable as the former, and my horse running away twice, I was pretty nearly jolted to pieces. (Corduroy roads are formed by entire trunks of trees laid transversely across the track.)

It is a curious fact, that neither in Canada nor in America do you meet with cream, except now and then perhaps at a private house in the former country, but I never once met with it in America; the only place of public entertainment where cream was offered to me was during this trip to Port Talbot, at a small way-side inn. The residence of Colonel Talbot, about four miles from the port of that name, is by far the most beautifully situated of any house I saw in Canada. It is placed on a cliff some hundred feet high, overhanging Lake Erie: from the drawing-room windows the view stretches as far as the eye can reach over the lake, and from the dining-room you gaze on the dark, silent, seemingly interminable forest. Altogether it is as delightful a situation for a summer residence as North America can produce. Lake Erie is of a very light blue colour, the consequence of the white sand that forms its bottom, and its extreme shallowness, the depth not averaging more than seventy feet. From this same cause, the navigation of Lake Erie is very dangerous and diffi-

cult, as, besides the shoals, &c., half an hour's sharp breeze raises the most disagreeable, short, rough sea imaginable.

The lakes differ very much in depth. Lake Erie is not more than one-thirteenth part of the depth of Lake Michigan: the average depths, as ascertained by a recent American survey, are, Ontario 270 feet, Erie 70 feet, Huron 600 feet, Michigan 1000 feet, and Superior 900 feet. I remained for some time watching a pair of ospreys fishing; it was curious to see how instantaneously as one came to a point the other joined company. Their sense of vision must be very acute, judging from the immense height at which they soared, and the smallness of the fish that every now and then they brought out of the lake. The osprey is very common on all the lakes, and is an exceedingly handsome bird, some sizes larger, as far as I could judge, than our now almost extinct English species.

After a most enjoyable visit of two days to the hospitable owner of Port Talbot, from whom I learned more about farming in Canada than I should have done from most men in a month, I returned to London, and thence by stage to Woodstock and Hamilton, where I took ship to Toronto: there was a very heavy sea running, and everybody was more or less indisposed. In accordance with our plan of going to the Mississippi, *via* Lakes Superior and Huron, and making an attempt to reach the Buffalo in that direction, we started, in company with about forty persons, not *all* belonging to our party, in two stages, for Lake Simcoe. The road lay through the district of Richmond, by far the most valuable and

most highly cultivated land in Upper Canada. We embarked on board a pigmy steamer at the head of a small creek which ran up about four miles from the lake. The creek was only just wide enough to allow of the vessel's passing, and the passage meandered in so remarkable a degree that the captain was afraid to use the steam, consequently the crew pushed the vessel on with long poles. Such a miserable, aguish, fœtid swamp I never saw. It is said to swarm with large water-snakes, and is so quaking that even the ripple caused by the passing vessel made it tremble for several hundred yards in every direction. Lake Simcoe is a very pretty little lake, of about twenty or thirty miles in length, and full of islands grouped in very picturesque style, said to be almost equal in beauty to the "Thousand Islands" on the St. Lawrence. We disembarked about 9 P.M. at a wooden village called Holland's Landing, where we expected to find conveyances to take us across the isthmus of twenty miles that separated us from Lake Huron; however, as by 10 o'clock none had made their appearance, I made a start with six others to walk to Sturgeon Bay. The night was so pitch-dark, and the road so infamously bad, that, at the end of the first six miles, five of the number shut up, and stopped at a small log-hut till some vehicle should arrive; but I and another, not relishing the notion of sitting with wet feet and pantaloons for an unlimited period, determined to push on. My companion was a very cheery, agreeable fellow, and, from having resided some years in Canada, had some knowledge of forest walking and of keeping to the same track, which by great good luck we did. We scrambled on for several

hours along a narrow track, with holes large enough to bury one: there was no moon; the stars gave us very little assistance, and we were beginning to get rather tired, and our feet rather cold, from having walked so long in the water.

We arrived at Sturgeon Bay about 4 A.M., to the great wonder and astonishment of the captain and crew, who could scarcely understand our having found our way during the night. About 8 A.M. the waggon containing our fellow-passengers arrived; they had passed a miserable night, nine hours going twenty miles, with four horses, and ruts that nearly dislocated every bone in their bodies. During the day we got under weigh for the Saulte de Ste. Marie, distant 400 miles due west. Our course lay through Georgian Bay, which is the northern end of Lake Huron, or rather separated from it by Manitoulin Island. We called at several places to pick up passengers for the Saulte, or Sou, as the Yankees call it. Manitoulin is the residence of the west tribes of Canadian Indians, who have parted with the land reserved to them by treaty. At present, Ojibbeways, Chippewas, Potowatannies, and Senecas, to the number of four or five thousand, are located there; they pass a miserable half-starved existence, living on what small supplies of game or fish they can pick up for themselves, but trusting chiefly to the generosity of Government. They are a dirty, lazy, gipsy-looking lot of scoundrels, much given to drinking and smoking, and to the beating of their squaws and dogs; and though every facility is afforded them for acquiring a certain knowledge of farming, and they are purposely allowed to feel the pangs of hunger; yet

the old leaven is so strong in them, that they actually prefer to starve rather than work.

I heard a story in America, but whether it is old or new I don't remember, in illustration of how frequently Missionary labours are thrown away. An Episcopalian missionary who came to reside amongst the Indians, not being sufficiently acquainted with their language, was forced to employ an interpreter, who explained each sentence of his discourse as he proceeded. His subject was the Fall of Man, and he said that as a punishment for his disobedience, God had condemned man to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. When this sentence was interpreted to the Indians, they seemed much pleased, and grunted out their acquiescence, which rather surprised the Clergyman, as he fancied that any doctrine of that nature would be quite as much at variance with their feelings as he knew it to be with their actions. On inquiring the reason of this strange behaviour, the interpreter told him that he knew it was of no use telling the men that they should labour, for that they would pay no attention to it, and that therefore he had told them instead, that God was very much displeased, and had condemned the squaws to hoe corn! It was this sentiment, so very congenial to their ideas, which gave rise to their expressions of assent.

The scenery of Georgian Bay is very beautiful; there are no less than 36,000 islands, varying in length from five feet to fifty miles, dispersed over it, between its extreme ends; for the most part they are beautifully wooded and rocky, with the water of great depth between them, of the deepest blue.

The passage is frequently so intricate and *labyrinthine* that you cannot see your course for more than three hundred yards before you, and you are continually conjecturing how you are to get on, and expecting that this time, at least, you will run ashore or be obliged to back astern, when almost as the vessel touches the trees which fringe the water's edge, some unexpected little passage opens, barely wide enough to admit the steamer, and you shoot through into some other miniature lake, only to experience the same amount of surprise in getting out of it. I don't doubt it is the finest fresh-water archipelago in the world. The storms on Lake Huron are very severe and dangerous, and wrecks frequently occur.

We arrived at the Saulte towards evening, and on landing found a very comfortable hotel on the American side. The Rivière de Ste. Marie, which is some thirty or forty miles long, connects Lakes Superior and Huron; the first half mile is a rapid, hence the name. There is a very good town, considering it is an infant, on the American side, but nothing but a Hudson's Bay trading fort on the Canadian. The Saulte is, generally speaking, a remarkably dull place, depending entirely, both for its ready money and its visitors, on the copper mines of Lake Superior; but during our visit it was gayer than had ever been remembered even by the "oldest inhabitant," who had been there nearly three years! The reason was, that the Chippewas had some months before occupied some copper mines on the Canadian shore, expelling the miners and committing other improprieties, under the plea that they had not been paid for the land. In consequence of these insubordinate pro-

ceedings, a company of Rifles was sent up at a moment's notice from Toronto, late in the fall of the year, and, after escaping deaths by water, and frost, and snow, a great deal more by luck than management, they arrived at the Saulte in the course of the winter. This of course added to the gaiety of the place; and our steamer bringing up thirty rattling tourists and speculators besides, the small town saw such days as I don't think it will see again in a hurry. The Americans always have a company of infantry at the Saulte, consequently there were two small armies, one occupying the Canadian, the other the American side, and as these hostile armies had to be supplied with corn and meat fixings entirely from the little town, the amount of business down was greater than usual.

We mustered a very jovial party at the Saulte: five or six British officers from Canada, *en route* to Chicago and the Western Prairies to shoot prairie hen; an Indian Commissioner, several bankers, fishermen, speculators in corn and copper, Hudson's Bay agents, and divers others,—swelled our party at the Clinton House to about fifteen Britishers and ten or twelve Americans. The fishing was good; the bathing good; the weather and season perfectly delicious; and, moreover, the world-renowned, or rather Canada-renowned white-fish, is only found in perfection in Lake Superior. It is certainly a very fine well-flavoured fish, more resembling a jack in flavour than any other I can think of, but by no means, in my opinion, equalling a "curdy" salmon of Tweedside remembrance. We generally passed the day over at the Hudson's Bay store, where the English

soldiers were quartered. During the winter, there had been a "difficulty" between the civil authorities on the American shore and the British officers, and there were writs out in consequence against the latter, which although of course harmless so long as they remained on their own bank, would ensure their arrest the instant they touched the American side—a consummation devoutly to be avoided; and, consequently, as they could not join the gay and festive throng at the Agapemone in the evening, we went over to them. The "difficulty" was honourable to both nations, and to the individuals concerned in it, therefore I don't suppose I shall be doing wrong by mentioning it.

During the winter, when the Rivière de Ste. Marie was frozen over, the desertions from the English company became very numerous; but although it was very easy to get to the Saulte, it was very difficult to leave it; for the only route to the States during the winter lay through Canada; the deserters were therefore obliged to remain till the spring. The officer in command, a high-spirited, determined man, had told his men when they commenced deserting, that though they could cross the river they could not escape, and that he would bring them back, or lose his commission. Accordingly, when the number had amounted to twelve, he made preparations to seize them, having previously communicated with the American officer, and informed him of his determination. The American was not behind-hand with him in frank and generous courtesy, and promised all the assistance in his power, procuring also a plan

of the house where the men were lodged all together for greater safety, as they knew of the intention to seize them, and being provided with arms, were determined to resist to the last. It was thought better to delay the attack till the ice had broken up, as, if the communication between the two shores were uninterrupted, the Americans might commence reprisals, and bad feelings might arise, which it would be very difficult to allay. Accordingly, two or three days after the ice had broken up, Captain C——, his subaltern, and twenty volunteers, embarked about 3 A.M. in two large boats for the American shore. All their plans had been fully matured, and marching straight to the house, they burst the door with the crow-bars they had prepared, seized all the deserters, and took them down to the boats, the whole proceeding not having occupied more than five minutes, and not a shot fired, or a man hurt. The American officer, although he could not personally assist, was present, and thoroughly approved of Captain C——'s conduct. Not so, however, the free and enlightened citizens of Ste. Marie! They were almost demented; nothing was talked of but the insult to the "Everlasting Eagle!"—"Infringement of territory!"—"Violation of sanctuary," &c. succeeded by vows of dire revenge; blood, and blood alone could wipe out the disgrace, and blood they would have. A petition was immediately sent to Congress, and the General commanding the district was sent down to make inquiries. However, there is no love lost between the civil and military authorities in America, and the General, looking at the

whole affair with the eye of a soldier, said that Captain C—— had acted well; it was pluckily done, and his own officer had done right in supporting him. The English General in command expressed the same opinion, and the matter between the military powers was thus virtually at an end, although a correspondence of some months was carried on between the two Governments.

There is no doubt that it was well and gallantly done, and had a very good effect on the rest of the men; but still Captain C—— ran a great risk of losing his commission. If he had failed, he would most likely have done so; and if the American General had not taken it exactly in the light he did, his position would have been equally unpleasant.

A Government Commissioner had come with us from Toronto to inquire into the Indian dispute regarding the mines, and the justice of their demands. A large number of Chippewas from the shores of Lake Superior, and further north, had consequently assembled to meet him, and a few days after our arrival at the Saulte we accompanied him to a "big talk," that was to be held on the Canadian shore.

The leader and spokesman of the Indians was a Chief, called "Peau de Chât," or "Racoon Skin."—He was the lithest looking scoundrel I ever saw, and would, I am sure, have enacted the character of Magua, in the "Last of the Mohicans," to perfection. He had been educated by the Jesuits, and spoke French with fluency; his costume was not a very becoming one—a black evening dress coat, fitting

very tightly, a dress shirt and mocassins. His second in command was an old Chief, dressed in a soiled and faded general officer's uniform, a present from the Hudson's Bay Company. Peau de Chât spoke long and well, but Mr. Robinson told us that his demands were ridiculous and unjust, and that he was altogether a *mauvais sujet*, and not to be trusted. Talking of the Jesuits—that wonderful society has stations in Canada and North America, and, as is generally the case, they exercise extraordinary influence amongst their proselytes, and also amongst several tribes of Indians. In the year 1684, two Missionaries, Father Hennepin and another, were despatched by the General of the day, to North America: they penetrated through Canada to Lake Superior, and from thence to the Mississippi, where they discovered and gave names to several of the most remarkable features in the country, which they retain to this day—St. Peter's, St. Paul's, St. Anthony's, &c.: and the Jesuits resided some years at the end of Lake Superior, at "La Pointe," one of the Twelve Apostle Islands. We made a party of seven or eight to canoe down the Rivière Ste Marie some distance to Mud Lake, a spot famous for its quantity of wild-fowl: there we remained camping out and feeding on ducks for three days; our party shot any number of them, and several bitterns "bumbling in the mire," as Chaucer has it: they are very good eating. Mud Lake is rather remarkable in its nature, for although about twenty miles square, it is in no place more than five feet deep, and is covered with reeds which grow

to a considerable height above the surface; a stranger paddling about alone would as infallibly lose himself as in a forest, and with little more chance of extricating himself. The wind being fair for our return, we hoisted our blankets for sails, and spanked along merrily at the rate of four or five knots an hour, enlivened by the French patois Chansons of the Canadian boatmen.

One of our men had been laid up most of the time with cholera, and when we arrived at the Saulte, we found it had broken out there, and that three persons out of the small community had "gone under." The ravages of the cholera in America that year (1850) were frightful, especially amongst the emigrants on the Prairies.

At the Saulte, I met one of the Hudson Bay Company's employés—he had just returned from the Mackenzie River, where he had been for thirty years, not leaving for a day: he was a Shetlander, but had very nearly forgotten his native tongue, and the few words of English he did speak were perfectly unintelligible. He had never seen or even heard of a steamboat, and his exclamations of wonder and surprise at seeing one were very amusing.

The summers in the latitude of Mackenzie River are never of more than ten weeks' duration, and during the whole of his residence there, he had only tasted vegetables twice, and fresh meat not quite so often. He had lived entirely on pemmican, fish, grease, &c. After remaining about ten days at the Saulte, our missing companion having rejoined us, we chartered a propeller to take us down Lake

Superior to La Pointe: our party had been a very friendly and pleasant one, and we parted, I believe, with mutual regret, and with reiterated warnings regarding our "hair fixings," and the "snow and starvation doings" which we should have to encounter before our return to civilization, to which we responded by promises of presents of savoury hump and dried tongues.

We arrived at La Pointe in four days, steaming nearly the whole way, and calling at three of the Mining Establishments on the American shore.

The Cliff copper-mine is the richest in the world; the copper is so pure and the veins so large, that it is cut out in blocks with the cold chisel, the smelting process being entirely dispensed with. I have seen blocks of upwards of a ton weight so pure, that you might cut off the weight of a penny piece, and it would be worth more than a penny. In some of the specimens its excessive purity is a disadvantage, as the working by cold chisel is a very expensive operation.

The Burra-Burra mines of South Australia pay the original shareholders 800 per cent.! and the copper is not found in such purity, nor in such abundance, nor is the market so near at hand, as at Lake Superior. The only reason why the latter do not answer is, that however well the Yankee principle of "every man on his own hook" may answer in many of the walks of life, in war and in mining operations, when a combination of power is wanted, it does not answer, and till a Company starts forward, with large capital and under proper direction, the

American mines will never pay: when that is the case, I have no doubt money will be coined in the mining districts.

Embarked on board the *Independence*, screw-propeller, for La Pointe, with tents, ammunition, provisions, &c. Propelled down the lake at the rate of four knots, stopping at Eagle Harbour and Carp Bay. The water of Lake Superior is the purest and coldest I ever tasted,—a deep blue colour, like the Atlantic 1,000 miles from land; it has an average depth of 900 feet. Storms arise very quickly, and the seas run as high as any ocean, and, moreover, there is no sea-room; but there is no winter sailing on account of the ice. During a hurricane, three months after we left, three of the propellers with all their crews were lost.

We were propelled along about twenty miles, from rather a fine coast, towards La Pointe. The endless black masses of forest give the country a very sombre appearance; large trees are rarities in North American forests, on account, I imagine, of their growing so close together, and the want of sufficient sun and air. La Pointe, the Indian settlement, and residence of the American Chippeway agent, is situated at the most southern extremity of the most southern of the Twelve Apostle islands. As I before mentioned, it was once the residence of Father Lewis Hennepin, a Jesuit, the first white man who discovered Lake Superior, and who lived there with the Indians for many years.

We had a letter for Mr. Oakes, the Indian agent, and were hospitably received by him, at La

Pointe, and put into a proper train for our projected canoeing expedition of three weeks to the Mississippi. His naïve, pretty little wife, a Chippewa half-breed, reminded me much of the Spanish beauty of Andalusia. The half-breeds of different tribes vary considerably in beauty; those of the Chippewa nation are invariably good-looking, while the Sioux are almost as invariably hideous. There is a very remarkable difference between the features and general appearance of the men and women of the different Indian tribes; the latter seem to be almost of another race, shorter, squarer, with broad low foreheads, and long eyes placed far apart; these peculiarities are not nearly so remarkable in the men.

CHAPTER IV.

FROM LA POINTE TO STILL-WATER.

WE bought a birch-bark canoe for eighteen dollars, and hired an old half-bred Canadian *voyageur* and his son at a dollar per day. The old fellow ("old Souverain," as he was called) was the most cheery old individual I ever met; he was upwards of sixty, very thin and small, and, with a red flannel shirt I gave him, looked exactly like a monkey you see going about with an organ. His excessive restlessness gave one the idea that he was hung on wires and had been fed on sparrows. He was a most extraordinary specimen of muscle and endurance, condensed into the smallest possible space. He worked from morning till night, and then never slept, singing the greater part of it, eating hardly anything but tobacco, and never once complained of fatigue. He was a regular Frenchman; at one moment throwing up his arms and tearing what little hair he had with passion, and the next dancing, laughing, and singing, as if he had never known what care was; he was one in a thousand, and the best voyageur for pluck, endurance, and civility, from Lake Superior to Mackenzie River. He reminded me very much of some of the Chamouni guides: he spoke a sort of demi-semi-intelligible French; his son, nothing but Chippeway. Mr. Oakes advised us not to go to St.

Paul's by the route we proposed, viz. by the Rivière des Bois Brulés and by the Lake of Ste Croix, as it lay through the neutral country where the Chippeways and Siouxs generally met; and as he knew that each nation had a war party out, either of whom would rob us, or even "raise" our hair, with the greatest complacency, if they got good opportunity, he advised us to go by the St. Louis River instead. At La Pointe, Mr. Oakes introduced us to three Chippeway *braves*, "The Blackbird," "The Eagle that Swoops," and "The White Beaver." They had each taken several scalps. No Indian can wear a war eagle's plume till he has struck a *coup*, and then he may wear one for each coup struck. Some months back the Sioux made a "raise" of thirteen Chippeway scalps, most of them women and children.

The "Eagle that Swoops" was distinguished for a very splendid (?) action performed against his hereditary enemies, the Sioux: he and some of his party had been on the war-path in the Sioux country, and arriving at a village where all the Sioux warriors were absent, they amused themselves with scalping and torturing the squaws and children. When they had had sufficient amusement they started on their return, and the "Eagle" wishing to take some little plaything to his lodge for his squaw and children, had spared a young Sioux child, which he strapped upon his back and carried for some short time; but the child beginning to be tiresome and to cry, he laid its head on a fallen tree, and cut it off with his scalping knife; then, sticking head and all its appendages into his girdle, he strode on to join his companions, as if nothing had happened. He relates this story with

great apparent satisfaction, and I have no doubt would be too happy to do it again.

All the Indians prefer the English to the Americans, as the English Government has acted much more honourably with regard to the land and annuities secured to them by treaties. The Americans have no respect whatever for Indian treaties, and drive the Indians before them whenever they feel so inclined, forcing them either into their enemies' land, where they are scalped—or into some miserable neutral ground, where they starve. The Chips and Sioux have the same name for the English, Shagenach, which, spoken in a guttural voice, sounds very like the Gaelic word Sassenach.

We started in the canoe at eight o'clock on the morning of the 2d of September, a party of seven, including the old French Canadian and his son. The day was drizzly, and we paddled along the shores of some of the Twelve Apostles. They form altogether a remarkable knot of islands, some of them as large as the Isle of Wight, with precipitous variegated sandstone cliffs, fifty or sixty feet high; they are beautifully striated, and after a shower of rain the colours are very bright (the same formation as Alum and Freshwater bays in the Isle of Wight), whence they are called the Painted Rocks. The storms of the lake have scooped the rocks into all kinds of graceful arches, caves, Corinthian columns, &c.; they are covered on the top with a rank growth of black fir-trees and cypress.

About mid-day we stopped to mend the canoe, and I took my gun and tried to follow what I thought was a covey of grouse till I was quite lost. I wandered about in a most unenviable state of mind for two or

three hours, when just as I was getting tired out, and had made up my mind to sleep amongst bears and rattlesnakes in the wood, to my no small relief I heard some shots; but now was the difficulty to find out the direction they were in, for every fresh shot seemed to come from a different quarter, and it was most aggravating hearing the shots approaching within a mile of me, and then again retreating till almost out of hearing.

My gun and I had both fallen into a pool of water, so that I could not return the shots to enable my companions to find me. I yelled myself hoarse, with as much effect as if yelling to the ocean. The shots at last seemed to move steadily in the direction in which I was. I remained perfectly stationary, and at last had the satisfaction of hearing a shout. I shouted in return, and hurrying towards the voice, I came to the river and found the old guide and the canoe. They had found me quite by chance, following their own instincts, not having heard my gun once. Last year an American from the mines lost his way in this part of the forest, and his body was only discovered in the winter by the number of wolves and bears infesting the spot.

We canoed a mile or two further on, and camped on a "silver strand," on the Lake shore. The cool fresh breezes that sweep across Lake Superior are too sharp for the mosquitos, who never approach within 200 or 300 yards of the lake; consequently, by camping at the very edge, we avoided their delicate attentions, and had nothing more annoying to cope with than the little black fly; however, they were bad enough, in all conscience.

The forests between Lake Superior and the Mississippi, where the country is very flat and wet, are composed almost entirely of black cypress; they grow so thick that the tops get intermixed and interlaced, and form almost a matting over head, through which the sun scarcely ever penetrates. The trees are covered with unwholesome looking mosses, which exhale a damp earthy smell, like a cellar. The ground is so covered with a rank growth of elder and other shrubs, many of them with thorns an inch long, and with fallen and decayed trunks of trees, that it is impossible to take a step without breaking one's shins; not a bird or animal of any kind is to be seen, and a deathlike silence reigns through the forest, which is only now and then interrupted by the rattle of the rattlesnake, (like a clock going down), and the chirrup of the chitnunck or squirrel. The sombre colour of the foliage, the absence of all sun even at midday, and the vault-like chilliness one feels when entering a cypress swamp, is far from cheering; and I don't know any position so likely to give one the horrors as being lost in one, or where one could so well realize what a desolate loneliness is. The wasps, whose nests like great gourds hang from the trees about the level of one's face; the mosquitos in millions; the little black flies, and venomous snakes, all add their "little possible," to render a tramp through a cypress swamp agreeable.

When a stranger, uninitiated in the mysteries of woodcraft, and unprovided with a compass, loses his way in a forest, he invariably continues describing circles of greater or less diameter round the spot where he was first puzzled. And this is easily

accounted for: for having nothing to guide him as to the points of the compass, and dreading lest he should be advancing too steadily in what may possibly be the wrong direction, he unconsciously continues tracking in a circle, and very likely finds himself at the end of several hours' toil in the identical spot where he first commenced. All assistance from the sun is rendered impossible by the crowded growth of the timber. I have frequently, when wishing to form some idea of the time of day, tried to get a glimpse of the sun, and even climbed trees for that purpose, but without success. It is a curious fact, however, that although very few rays do contrive to penetrate the heavy matted foliage of the cypress, yet that all the trunks are most free from moss on their western side, and this knowledge, and the other indescribable instincts which are so remarkable in the savage, enable an Indian to steer his course through the trackless forest with the greatest certainty. An Indian who has made a *cache* under a particular tree, will make his way years after to that spot, although it were a hundred miles distant, and through an unknown forest, with as little hesitation and in as straight a line as if it were the most direct and broadest road.

Canoed amongst The Twelve, and one small island, that as it was hardly worthy to be called an Apostle, we named St. Paul. We had a fair wind, stuck up our tents for a sail, and slid away at six knots an hour till we arrived at Rivière de Fer, where we camped, and went out shooting in the bush: saw nothing but fresh bear tracks. One of our companions would start alone (though warned by my

previous disaster), and got completely lost; and by the merest chance of our going up a small stream after sunset to shoot ducks, without any idea of finding him, we heard a gun very faintly in the distance, and knowing that there was no other party in the woods but our own within a hundred miles, we fired in answer, and by keeping up a succession of shots he was at length guided to the canoe. If it had not been for the scarcity of ducks, which led us further up the stream than we intended, he must have inevitably perished in the forest. He had been wet through for seven or eight hours, and had wandered at least ten miles through the bush away from home; we got him back at ten o'clock, quite exhausted. It rained and blew incessantly during the night. The tent leaked, and we suffered considerably from the wet and cold. Brandy-and-water to the n^{th} power was our only consolation. After being wind-bound in Iron River for a day or two, we were at length able to proceed, and reached the Rivière des Bois Brulés just in time to escape a heavy gale from the north-west, which would have driven us right out into the lake.

Soon after starting, in consequence of an understanding between the old guide and his son, the former told us his son was very ill and could not proceed, and that we must return and get another man. We were at first rather inclined to believe what he said; but as the son looked perfectly well, and his illness had come on so suddenly, we began to suspect that it was only a *ruse*, to secure the money which we had paid to the Indian agent at La Pointe; so after a little consideration we refused point blank to allow him to return. When he saw we were inexorable he gave a

shrug and a grunt, took a swill of brandy, lit his pipe, and was all right again. However, as we did not want him to be sick again, if he really had been so, and judging that a little warning might do him good, when we camped we administered five or six antibilious boli, and next morning presented him with a saline draught, composed of salts, enough to have killed a horse. This liberal allowance had a salutary effect, and the next day he started quite fresh. Found three Chippeway warriors and their families encamped in their birch-bark lodges, at the mouth of the river. Directly we arrived they hoisted an old Union Jack, and brought out a Morning Chronicle of 1836, which they were very proud of, though they had not the least idea what it meant. As the river was very shallow, the canoe heavy, and one of our men not quite up to the mark, we offered them a dollar a day to accompany us as far as the Grande Portage; but although the lazy fellows had not food wherewithal to keep body and soul together, they preferred lounging in their dirty lodges, smoking their kinnie kinnie, to earning a few dollars to buy blankets for the winter. As the river was too shallow to allow of our remaining in the canoe, we had to walk along the side through the thickest forest I ever saw, with occasional tracks of bear and reindeer. After toiling all day, and losing ourselves several times, nearly breaking our legs and putting out our eyes, stung by wasps and in continual dread of snakes, several of which we saw, we at length overtook the canoe, and to our great delight found the fire lighted, and our dinner of fried pork and fried flour nearly ready, and the night too chilly for

our enemies, the mosquitos. Nobody who has not experienced it can form any idea of the plague and torment of being pestered all day and night by these animals, or how completely they take away one's enjoyment. The mosquitos in the cypress swamps of North America are far more powerful and active than those of any other part of the world, and being of that dissolute race that "don't go home" even in the morning, but keep it up till a frost dries up their young blood, they are doubly annoying.

Monday, 8th.—We "humped" it for eight hours through the thickest bush. Not a glimpse of sun all day; dark and damp, scrambling or falling at every step over fallen or rotten trunks of trees, hidden by rank coarse grass; we could not see six feet before us, and were being continually stung by the wasps, whose nests, hanging from the trees, we every now and then inadvertently capsized. We killed a tortoise and ate him: his flesh tasted like bad chicken.

We continued to canoe it all day towards the Grande Portage, between the Rivière des Bois Brulés and the Lake of Ste Croix, (the former running to the Lakes, and the latter to the Mississippi,) through a miserable agueish cypress swamp. The river, in no place more than ten feet broad, in many hardly six, was of a dark pitch colour from the surrounding peat soil; and at night when we camped, sometimes we could not by any contrivance manage to lie in less than six inches of water. The forest was very still, no birds, or sounds of any description. The trail of the Portage crossed a ridge of hills about 300 feet high, nearly the only hill, except the Couteau des Prairies, between the Alleghanies and the Rocky Mountains.

From the summit of the hill we had a very extensive view over the forest. The day was cloudy, and any view less interesting it is impossible to conceive. The eye sought in vain for some break, or some variety in shade or colour to relieve the endless monotony of black firs and cypress. The whole forest looked as if it was in mourning: any clearing, however small, would have been quite a relief. It is a great mistake imagining that the less cultivated a country is, the more beautiful it is: on the contrary, cultivation enhances the beauty of country a thousandfold, except where the beauty arises entirely from the natural grandeur of the country, such as Switzerland.

I have no doubt that the view from the Grande Portage of the Ste Croix, with the meandering streams of the Bois Brulés and the Ste Croix, would have been quite as beautiful as the view from Richmond Hill, had the cultivated clearings and green fields of the latter changed places with the black interminable forests of the former.

We had now left the waters that run into the Atlantic for those that run into the Gulf of Mexico; but so very flat is the country, that in the rainy season the waters from the same stream will frequently run different ways. The weight the voyageurs carry is quite wonderful; for any distance under six miles a man will carry 3 cwt.—a heavy mule load—and will carry from 100 to 170 lbs. for 200 or 300 miles, at the rate of 40 miles a-day; and you see "little weeds" of men carrying these weights that would break down the brawniest highlander that ever trod heather. It is all practice. At Ste. Fé de Bogota, in the Andes, where the natives are by no

means a powerful looking race of men, one man will carry a traveller (one of whom I heard weighed fourteen stone) for hours up the most precipitous mountain, in a chair fastened round the forehead and resting on the back.

The lake of Ste Croix very quickly narrows into the river of that name, and we canoed along all day, with cypress swamps and hideous swarms of mosquitos on both sides, and millions of ducks—the air almost black with them—but too wild to afford sport. They come in clouds to feed on the wild rice that grows here in great quantities. One evening when we camped, an Indian, greased and naked, came in to ask for food. They are the most improvident people, too proud to dig, but not in the least too proud to beg or thieve; never looking to the morrow, gorging one day, and barely subsisting for the next month. The Chippeways are a well-formed race, with the strut of a prince. This Indian had to keep his eyes "skinned," as he was not very far from the Sioux country, where he would have been snapped up like a young trout. However, our old guide told us, from the manner he was painted, and his carrying nothing but his arms, not even a blanket, that he imagined he was out on the war-path himself, prowling about in the hopes of picking up some stray Sioux. The mosquitos, who were grazing on us in shoals, did not appear to touch him. I suppose he was anointed in some way.

We had had no fresh meat for fifteen days but one canvass-backed duck; nothing but thin flour-cakes fried in grease, which, though not much among so many, we ate with great relish. The woods were alive with birds and wolves; there were great num-

bers of "whip-poor-wills;" it is a small brown bird, with a very pleasing note, exactly repeating the words from which it gets its name, laying the accent strongly on the "whip." It can be heard at a great distance, and its distinctness is sometimes quite startling. We caught a small sturgeon, about 4 lbs.; the little "crittur" had made rather a broken voyage of it, having come about 3,000 miles from the Gulf of Mexico to be eaten by five strange "Britishers" in the Rivière de Ste Croix. The Chippeway that came into camp the other night stole a hatchet and comb. They are the biggest thieves in the world, thinking it quite as worthy to take as to receive. The education of their youth, with regard to the right of *meum* and *tuum* is rather Spartan, *successful* theft being considered rather creditable than otherwise, especially if the white man be the sufferer. The nature of the forest began to change as we proceeded. The almond, cherry, plum, beech, maple, and other hard-wood trees, having taken the place of the cypress, the alder, and the fir. The foliage was just acquiring its autumnal tints, (nowhere more beautiful than in America,) and the change from the gloomy dismal black of the cypress swamp we had been accustomed to for the last fortnight, to the varied foliage, was very pleasing. Who can tell whether three hundred years hence the banks of the Ste Croix may not be studded with smooth lawns and villas like the Thames?

During our supper of pork and flour, an Indian arrived on his way up stream to shoot deer by torch-light. He was sitting in the bow of his birch-bark canoe, and his squaw paddling behind. The way in

which the "Chip-aways" or Carpenter Indians shoot deer during the summer, when the mosquitos and density of the underwood render forest hunting almost impossible, is rather curious: they place a flaming torch in the bow of the canoe, and immediately behind it a plank with a hole in it, behind which the hunter conceals himself. His squaw then, lying down, manages to steer the canoe, and they drift down as slowly as possible, keeping close to the bank. The deer, being animals with the organ of curiosity strongly developed, no sooner see this strange light floating down stream, than they come down to examine it, and sometimes approach till they are almost touching the canoe, when they receive a quietus in the shape of two or three ounces of buck-shot from the ten-shilling rifle of the Mingo. We offered to buy any deer he might kill, and he engaged to bring us one; however he *did not*, and for a good reason, that he and his village ate the only one he killed themselves.

Passed a miserable mosquito-ridden night. About midnight we were awoke by a pack of wolves hunting close to us. The whole forest seemed alive with them, and there must have been thirty or forty at least. They give tongue and take up the running by turns like a pack of hounds in England. Their note is not unpleasant, and gives one an idea of wild nature. Sometimes they seemed within 200 or 300 yards of us, and then again the sound almost died away in the distance. There is something slightly unearthly to a man from the civilized diggings, hearing a pack in full cry at the dead of night, and I could almost

realize the German legends of the phantom hounds and huntsmen.

Paddling down stream we came upon a Chippeway village, and found some thirty or forty miserable devils, well blown out with the buck that should have been ours, lounging before their bark lodges. Most probably they would starve for the next five or six days, as no real Indian ever thinks of going out on a hunt until he actually begins to feel the cravings of hunger. The country was getting more and more lovely, and one hour of such lovely weather and beautiful scenery fully repaid us for all our hard doings.

The stream was half-a-mile broad, with sloping banks, and soft thick woods alternating with luxuriant prairie, like going through a gentleman's park :— we passed a log shanty inhabited by an American, a good specimen of a "far west" pioneer. He had selected a beautiful spot, paid no rent, had no title, and might be removed any day by a legitimate purchaser, though most probably he would shoot any man who was bold enough to buy over his head; but still, on such an insecure tenure he had cleared eight or ten acres of massive timber. We glided down stream, passing another little "clearing." (Clearings seemed quite curiosities after nearly three weeks without seeing one bigger than one's hand.) The poor fellow, a Yankee, who had made it, and lived there four or five years, was two weeks ago shot dead by an Indian, who thought he had some whisky. The Indian watched him like a cat, through a chink in the block-house, and when he had satisfied himself took a deliberate shot, killed and

scalped him, and made tracks for the woods. However, his chief, fearing the displeasure of the American government, gave him up, and he was hung. We found everything in the hut exactly as it was when the man was shot. The kettle was on the extinguished fire, and some half-baked bread in the oven. We slept in the hut. Our guide and his son were very superstitious, and believing that the ghost haunted the scene of its murder, nothing would persuade them to sleep in it.

There is an immense lumbering trade on the Ste Croix. The trees are cut during the winter by gangs of axe-men, and floated down during the floods to the saw-mills. Some of the weirs to guide the trunks on their passage down and to keep them in the stream, are on a very gigantic scale. We reached the Chûte de Ste Croix, where the river is compressed between precipitous lime-stone cliffs, and forms some very picturesque falls of about half a mile in length. There is an enormous saw-mill at the Chûte, employing some fifty or sixty men, with whom we fraternized and dined at a kind of *table d'hôte* with them, for a quarter of a dollar a-head.

The saw-mills were not at work, and everything seemed out of order, and on inquiring the reason, I was rather surprised to hear that the property was in Chancery. I had hardly expected such an answer in a young country, and especially in the Far West. Like other Englishmen, who instead of making swans of their ducks, generally make ducks of their swans, and, like a race of hypochondriacs, continually fancy that they are afflicted with institutions and taxes

from which other nations are free, I had imagined that the "law's delay" and the misery consequent thereupon, were peculiar to our own little island: I was delighted to be undeceived, and I am convinced that the more an enlightened Englishman compares the abuses and annoyances arising from our institutions at home with those existing in other countries,—even in the "Land of Liberty,"—the more reason he will have to be proud at the comparison, and the less reason will he have for wishing to see those institutions, the petty annoyances of which we know, supplanted by others whose evils we know not of, but of which we may be sure there is no lack.

Proceeding onwards we crossed the boundary between the Chippeway and Sioux country, and arrived at "Still-Water," a small settlement created and supported entirely by the lumbering trade. Here we arranged our attire to greater advantage, plastered down our hair, and put on new mocassins. Altogether, with our Canadian cloth shooting coats, and trowsers, and red flannel shirts, and nondescript caps, we looked rather like respectable "navvies," out for the Sunday. One of our party, not content with a red flannel shirt, had red flannel drawers and blanket; and, with beard and moustache, a more perfect impersonation of *Le Rouge Déterminé* could hardly be imagined. About twenty miles above the Chûte de Ste Croix we met a birch-bark canoe, with two half-breeds and two passengers, dressed in blue blanket coats, mocassins, and beaver-skin caps. Our voyageurs stopped to converse, and we exchanged

courtesies and "liquored" with the travellers. They said they were *en route* to Lake Superior, by the same route we had come. We told them there were plenty of mosquitos. "Then did we strip our sleeves and show our scars," &c. They seemed a rough set, and we imagined they were traders, but our guide told us it was the chief justice of Minnasota and his secretary, or marshal, going the circuit! Fancy our judges going the circuit in birch-bark canoes, sleeping in the open air, and living on salt-pork and potatoes!

CHAPTER V.

FROM ST. PAUL'S TO LAC-QUI-PARLE.

THE Chippeways, or Ojibbeways, once the most powerful tribe of Wood Indians on the whole continent of North America, originally possessing a territory bounded on the east by the Atlantic, and on the west by the "Father of Waters," have now, by the steady encroachment of the Whites on one side, and their enemies the Sioux on the other, been gradually deprived of their territory, till at present they have only the forest between Lake Superior and Lake Winnipeg that they can call their own. They are continually at war with the Sioux, but owing to one tribe being Wood and the other Prairie Indians, and neither of them fit for much out of their own country, their war is not very bloody, ten or twenty scalps a-year being the extent of the damage. The Chippeways, owing to their proximity to the Whites, have had many more chances of civilization than the Sioux, but as civilization has always been accompanied or rather preceded by its never-failing curse, whisky, their number is decreasing much more rapidly than the Prairie Indians, and their civilization is very little greater, since the latter have much more difficulty in procuring liquor, and from having

experienced its bad effects they have to a considerable extent given it up. They are a brave nation, judging them by the Indian standard; and whilst at St. Paul's a young warrior named "Jour Percé," or "Hole in the Day," the son of a great Chippeway chief of the same name, came all alone in his canoe from Lake Superior to the Mississippi, a distance of about 300 miles, 100 at least of which were through his enemy's country, and crossing it, made his way to a Sioux village, some miles distant, and there, watching his opportunity, shot and scalped a Sioux, after which he made his way back to his canoe and crossed over to St. Paul's, whence he struck into the forest on his homeward track. About two hours after his escape there were between 200 or 300 Sioux stripped, and in their war paint, rushing through the town, like so many demons, looking for him, but after some most miraculous escapes he got clear off to his country. On my return to St. Paul's I saw him in company with the Indian agent, having come for the purpose of patching up a peace with the Sioux. He was a good-looking young fellow, about two-and-twenty, as grave as a judge.

Leaving our canoe at Still-Water, we struck across a small prairie for St. Paul's. We took our Canadian voyageur and his son. The latter had never seen a town at all, and had no idea of any building larger than the trader's hut at La Pointe. It was very amusing to see his astonishment at almost every thing. He had never seen a vehicle of any description, and his delight at the waggon which took our luggage was intense. Being accustomed to the almost invisible trails of the woods, he could scarcely

understand the broad path that led from Still-Water to La Pointe, and *Tiyah! Quel chemin!* in broken French was uttered every instant.

St. Paul's is well situated on a high bluff overhanging the Mississippi, about five miles below the junction of the St. Peter River. The first glimpse of the Mississippi (or Father of Waters) quite exceeded in grandeur anything I had expected, and I then could hardly realize the fact that I was more than 2,000 miles from its mouth. It is at least a mile broad, very deep and clear, and it rolls majestically along two miles an hour, as if confident in its power, and quite capable of going its 3,000 miles without any exertion or fatigue. It is about the size of the Rhine at Cologne. There is here a Government agent for the Winnibagoes, a Dr. B. (to whom we had a letter of introduction). I imagine he is called doctor from the skill he displays in bleeding the Indians. The Winnibagoes are a small tribe of peacefully inclined Indians. Twenty years ago they possessed the country now forming the State of Iowa, one of the most fertile in the Union. The Government compelled them to sell their hunting grounds, and removed them some 400 or 500 miles north, to a miserable tract of country lying between the Sioux and the Chips, where they have the greatest difficulty in subsisting. They are continually returning to their old hunting grounds, but are as regularly driven back. Five years ago there was not a single hut on the ground now occupied by the town of St. Paul's. Now, in 1850, there is a town with 2,000 or 3,000 inhabitants, three or four hotels, churches, schools, and a public library. All

the houses are made of wood, of course. The mushroom growth of all these Western cities is caused by a sudden influx of speculators, on account either of the fertility of the land, or for the lumbering trade; the latter reason, and very fine water "privileges," have been the cause of the rise of St. Paul's. Most likely, like the rest of the Western cities, it will go on increasing at an extraordinary rate, and will then suddenly tumble about their heads like a pack of cards. We went to a wooden hotel, conducted exactly on the principle of the Astor-house, full of Indian traders, Western farmers, gamblers, bullies—a race that you only meet with in the Far West.

We called on Dr. B., the American agent of the Fur Company, and by him were introduced to a Mr. McLeod, a Canadian, and Indian trader. He had traded with the Sioux for thirteen years, and had a trading fort, under the management of a half-breed, at a place called Echo Lake, or Lac-qui-parle, about five hundred miles from St. Paul's, which he visited every year, for the purpose of taking up goods and bringing down buffalo robes and other skins: he offered to let us accompany him, if we could get horses, and promised at Lac-qui-parle to supply us with some half-breeds or Canadian trappers, as guides for the buffalo country. The country about St. Paul's has not been burnt for some time, and consequently is covered with young timber, chiefly oaks and maple. As the Indians get driven back, the prairies in consequence escape the annual burning, and the trees spring up, and grow with the utmost luxuriance. About twelve miles above St. Paul's, the Mississippi, there about a mile in breadth, rolls majestically over

a fall of eighteen feet, which constitutes the "Falls of St. Anthony." Comparatively few foreigners have heard of these falls, and still fewer have seen them: they are very grand, much more so than the fall of the Rhine at Schaffhausen, and would make the fortune of any river in Europe; but in the land of Niagara and Trenton they "don't shine."

We were horse-hunting during two or three days, the article being scarce and bad; however, by great good luck, we picked up three miserable screws, at prices varying from seventy to eighty dollars. During this time we held a long confabulation with six Indian traders, calculating our chances of sport and of being scalped; we came to the conclusion that there was as much chance of the one as of the other, and not much of either; the buffaloes in September and October being very far north, coming south only for the winter. The Indians, too, are not very friendly, especially to the Yankees.

St. Paul's is a very democratic place; the rights of labour are fully recognised, and a man considers he is conferring a favour by working for his employer. The following is a dialogue, almost word for word, which took place in the bar-room at St. Paul's, between an employer and a "gentleman" he wished to engage to chop wood. Scene—bar-room; Proprietor—a mild-looking case, seated at a table, reading a newspaper. Enter "Gentleman" to be hired, with beard and moustaches, Californian hat, and red flannel shirt, chewing an enormous quid, swaggering in; takes a chair, crosses his legs, begins whittling a piece of deal for a few minutes, and without lifting his eyes, or ceasing cutting, *loq.*—

"Are you the man as wants to see me? because, if so, my time's precious."

Proprietor (rising, and holding out his hand with marked civility). "Ha! Mr. Smith, how are you? I hope you have not been waiting long. My object in wishing to see you was to hear whether I should be fortunate enough to find you disengaged next week. I have a little job in the chopping line, and I want your assistance. Mr. S., and Mr. T., &c., have all promised me their assistance, and I have no doubt if you will kindly come, we shall be able to make you comfortable; and if we could persuade you to remain through the winter, why so much the better."

Gent. "Well, I guess—I won't go. Too far off—no newspapers."

Proprietor. "Oh! I hope you will come, Mr. Smith. You will confer a great favour on me; and although things are in the rough, I have no doubt you will find it answer your purpose."

Gent. "Well, I'll think of it. P'raps I may look in, some time next week, and see how it suits me."

Proprietor. "Well, it is really very kind of you, and if you could make it quite convenient to look in on Monday, you and the other gentlemen might be introduced, and commence together."

Gent. "Well, I guess I shan't go up on Monday: I've some business of my own to fix; but if I 'feel like work,' I'll step up on Wednesday or Thursday. Give us some baccy, will you?"

Proprietor. "Oh! certainly: and won't you take a drink?"

Gent. "Well, p'raps I may take a cocktail."

Both drink; Proprietor bows to Mr. Smith, who takes no notice of it, gulps down his liquor, and then turns on his heel without saying a word. This is not the least exaggerated in this democratic far-west country, where "liberty" is frequently understood to mean incivility and impertinence.

We started on the 13th of September, at 7 o'clock —a party of ten—the trader, McLeod, two Sioux half-breeds, myself and two companions, one Creole half-breed, and three Indians in their paint and feathers. I was suffering from a sharp attack of fever, and could hardly sit my horse. My companions had kindly offered to wait a day or two for me, but I thought it was useless, so determined to go, for if I was regularly in for fever, two or three days would make no difference, and I knew the prairie air was just as likely to kill as to cure me. Rode all day through a lovely well-wooded country, resembling Richmond Park, substituting new for old timber, and camped at night near some trees; when rolling myself in my buffalo robe, I tried in vain to sleep, but the fever came on rather severely. The moon looked as large and as bright as the sun, and the stars as large as the moon, and I was soon in a high state of feverishness. However, nature proved a good doctor, and towards morning my nose began bleeding violently, and continued for about three hours. I was a new man, and got up pretty fresh, though rather weak, next morning. The Indians, who always give names to strangers, christened me "Bloody Nose," and my companions "Water Rat," and the "Big White Man." We proceeded through a lovely country, passing an Indian village, where

we were hospitably entertained by a Sioux half-breed trader, whom, poor fellow, on our return from the prairie, we found dying of quinsey: the Indians are subject to, and suffer much from, diseases of the lungs and throat. The day was glorious, the ride most enjoyable, the atmosphere so much clearer, and the arch of heaven seemed so much more extensive than in Europe—so blue, so deep, so liquid—you seem to look right into it, instead of upon it. We started at daylight next morning for an Indian village, called "Travers de Sioux," leaving the half-breed and luggage to follow the best way they could. The trail crossed a very picturesque prairie, called Arrow Prairie, about twenty miles broad, bordered by a magnificent belt of cotton-wood trees. This belt of trees, commencing far north, runs for 500 miles due south, varying from five to ten miles in breadth. The prairie Indians call it "the Bigwood." What would they call some of the Canadian forests, extending 1,000 miles without a break?

After leaving the Arrow Prairie, our path ran through a belt of timber. The silk-cotton trees, beautifully festooned with sumach and wild vines, formed the most perfect natural harbours imaginable, and came up to my idea of a forest far more than the cypress swamps of North America. We reached the banks of the St. Peter, about 300 yards broad at this place, where we swam our horses without difficulty. Went to the lodge of a half-breed Scotchman named Graham, a descendant of Claverhouse, and were very hospitably received by him and his squaw, and feasted on ducks and tea, which were becoming luxuries again. We found a good many

Indians come in for the purpose of purchasing powder and shot for their fall hunt. They looked upon us as great curiosities, sitting around us by dozens, for hours at a time, and watching every movement. It was very annoying at first, but we soon got accustomed to it. The young Indians are very inquisitive and troublesome, but the warriors and old men are very grave and reserved, seldom laughing, and taking great pains to conceal any feeling of surprise or curiosity. The young Indians are the greatest dandies in the world, painting and greasing themselves in the most tasty manner, and carrying their pipes and tomahawks as our dandies do their canes in England. The great object of a young Indian's ambition is to possess a looking-glass, which they cherish as their life, and use at least a dozen times a-day to Adonize themselves. The old men and warriors, who have trophies to show and can wear an eagle's plume, scorn such childish ornaments. I was surprised to see the young men playing a game very like *les graces*, with sticks and hoops. They are inordinate smokers, and smoke at least fifty pipes a-day when unemployed. They do not smoke the tobacco pure, but mix one part with three of the dried bark of the red willow, called kinnikinnik, which has a pleasing taste and aroma, but is rather hot to the mouth.

In the afternoon we walked out to the prairies to shoot grouse; bagged four or five brace only. They are larger than Scotch grouse, more like grey fowl; they fly slowly and take short flights, and sit like stones. They increase in a wonderful way in those prairies that are partly settled about Chicago and Gallena, and

other frontier towns where their enemies the wolves and foxes have been driven away, and where they are only exposed to the attacks of men as at the above-mentioned places; a good shot may bag from eighty to one hundred brace a day. There was something very exciting and invigorating in the clear air of the prairie, which one becomes sensible of almost immediately. For the first time, I saw the prairie on fire, (a fine sight,) though in this instance the grass was not high, and the fire did not progress faster than five or six miles an hour. During the night we had a tremendous thunder-storm.

Some chiefs from the Missouri came in for their powder and shot; they were painted and ornamented with feathers and beads; they all had blue or crimson blankets, which they wore over the left shoulder, in very classic style; one of them, the "Falling Hail," was a distinguished warrior, and wore several eagle plumes. Last year his arm was broken in two places by a bullet, in an attack upon the Crow Indians; an account which he gave us through an interpreter of his sufferings, being obliged to ride six days on horse-back, with his arm smashed in two places and nothing to eat, was very interesting. One of the half-breed's little boys broke his arm and seemed to suffer a good deal. I could not help remarking the stoicism of the "Falling Hail," who, whilst everybody was hurrying about and lamenting, sat perfectly still smoking his pipe before the fire, till at last the boy's father came to him; he listened to him with the greatest gravity, and when he had finished his pipe, rose, and went and examined the arm, and then splitting some pieces of pipe-

stems for splints, he bandaged them with the thongs of his mocassins, and made a good cure of it, for before we left the country the boy was running about all right. About three o'clock the following morning, we saw the most beautiful aurora borealis one can conceive possible. The Indians hold it in great dread, and call it the "Medicine Fire," and the "Spirit of the Night," and fancy it has the power of making them good shots.

The "trail" now lay across a Prairie Planche, or open prairie without timber, to which we had now bid farewell, there not being any timber, except on the banks of some of the rivers, from thence to the Pole. We crossed several old buffalo paths and innumerable skulls and bones, but at this time of year the buffaloes themselves are nearly 1,000 miles to the north-west, though three months ago they were swarming over the very country we were now crossing. We crossed Beaver River and a trading post called Les petits Rochers, on the St. Peter River, kept by La Framboise, a Potowatamie half-breed, and a friend of Mr. Catlin, of whom, by-the-bye, he had not a very exalted opinion. Much to our disgust, a severe frost had set in, though we had the consolation of hearing that the Indian summer, the most beautiful part of the year, which generally lasts two or three weeks, had not yet commenced. We had given up sleeping under cover, and rolling ourselves up in our blankets, slept round the fire, if there was any; the nights were sometimes very cold. Crossing the Chippeway River, we at length reached "Lacqui-Parle," and found a camp of nearly 200 "lodges," about 2,000 Indians in all, collected from the Rocky Mountains and every part of the Sioux territory,

waiting for McLeod's arrival with the ammunition, and also under the impression that there was a treaty pending with the American government respecting the purchase of some of their land bordering on the Mississippi. The first glimpse of the encampments, the setting sun shining on 200 cow-skin lodges, as white as snow, (the Indians kill the cows in summer for their lodges and for their own dresses, as the skins are not warm enough for the traders to buy,) with hundreds of horses tethered about, was altogether a highly picturesque and wild scene. There were about 200 young men, stripped to the waist, in their war-paint and plumes, performing the scalp-dance to the monotonous chant of about 200 squaws, who were squatted round forty poles, from which were suspended the scalps of some wretched Pawnee men, women, and children, which had been brought in by a war-party a few days before. They had come suddenly on the Pawnee encampment, whilst the warriors were on a hunt, and had made a great "raise." Every now and then during the dance, some warrior would dash forward and strike his tomahawk into some particular post, signifying that he was the "brave" who had taken that scalp. Whereupon the squaws would redouble their chants, calling out his name, and extolling his bravery; and then suddenly changing their tones, they would break out into a yell, expressing contempt for the unfortunate deceased, calling him dog, coward, and other abusive epithets, and abusing his father, mother, and relatives to the latest generation. It is rather a disgusting sight, but gave us a greater idea of savage life than anything we saw during the trip.

After we had watched them for some time, they broke up and crowded round us, staring, and handling our guns, pistols, &c., in rather too familiar a manner; so much so that McLeod, who knew some of the old chiefs, begged them to request the younger ones to desist, and I certainly felt my hair "fixings" safer when they were at a little distance. A more savage bloodthirsty looking set of fellows (some painted like skeletons, and others all white, and some red) I never saw; and in the excited state they were in, I have no doubt if McLeod had not been known to them, they would not have minded trying the effect of a white scalp in contrast to the Pawnees. We retired for the night to McLeod's log-hut, which was built of blocks of timber, laid together in the rough, and made strong enough to resist any attack. Directly we began our supper, about thirty of the chiefs of the different tribes came in, and turning out all the young men, who again began to annoy us, and rolling themselves up in their blankets and robes, sat smoking till we had finished. Their conduct displayed a marked contrast to the younger men, as they smoked with the greatest gravity without displaying any curiosity. When we had finished, an old chief of the Yankton band, from the banks of the Missouri, called "Le Bœuf Levé," rose, and throwing his robe gracefully over his left shoulder, and freeing his right arm, commenced a speech, congratulating McLeod on his arrival, and asking him about the treaty, &c. He also said he was very glad to see us, and when he had finished his speech, he came forward and shook us by the hand; a ceremony that was performed by all the other chiefs in

turn. We then gave them some tobacco, and joined their smoke with the greatest amity.

An Indian's delivery, when speaking, is deliberate, slow, and monotonous, almost as if thinking aloud, and the punctuations are very strongly marked, and very long; their action is very fine, and they use a great deal of it. They display a favourable contrast to European orators, in never interrupting one another by word or look, even though the speaker may be uttering sentiments quite opposed to those of his audience, or even things they all know to be untrue, and could refute; still he is always listened to with apparent respect and attention, and when he has sat down, although perhaps there may be a dozen who are burning to contradict, or agree with him, they sit a few minutes, as if meditating on what had been said, and then rise with the greatest deliberation, always giving way to the eldest. Certainly a council of Indian chiefs is generally conducted with more decorum and self-respect, than most public meetings in more civilized countries.

The Sioux are the tallest and most haughty of any of the Indians, and there is a grace in their movements which is very striking. To see a chief, full of pride and self-possession, dressed in his war-plumes, with his blanket or buffalo robe, adorned with his exploits, thrown gracefully over his shoulder, stalk deliberately into a council, is about as fine a study for an artist as I ever saw, and proves, that for grace and noble bearing, nature's nobility is not far behind those of the world's creating. The very young men, before they have struck a coup, or been on a war party, dress their hair like the old

pictures of Venetian pages, in Shakspeare and elsewhere, viz. cut quite close round the forehead, and hanging down all round the neck. All the small children use pop-guns, so that the amusements of the young heir to a dukedom in England, and the wild Indian on the prairie, have more affinity than one would suppose. The young Sioux ladies wear their hair in two long plaits down the back, the extremities ornamented with ribbon. How horrified Mrs. Kenwigs would have been, had she known that in giving pig-tails to the lovely Merleena, and her other beautiful offspring, she was adopting a Sioux fashion!

The Sioux, particularly the squaws, are said, by phrenologists, to display more traces of Asiatic descent than any other tribe of Indians; they say their skulls are identical with the Mongolian races of Asia. There is, I believe, very little doubt, that they came from there originally, viâ Behring's Straits, which are frozen over in winter; or even the Aleutian Isles might have afforded a means of transit to a nation of far less enterprise that the northern Asiatics are known to have possessed. Many of their customs would lead one to suppose so: they have the tradition of the deluge, even to the particular of the dove; and in several ceremonies and observances they follow the Levitical law, almost to the letter; moreover, the practice of scalping, now so universal amongst the North American Indians, is known to have been practised by the Scythians. When the northerly shores of Oregon were first navigated, the inhabitants of Nootka Sound, lying in latitude 50 N., were found wearing identically the same three-cornered caps as those worn by the Chinese.

Their religion is very confused, and no two Indians have entirely the same belief: they believe in a good and evil spirit; they pray to the latter to avert evils, but never to the former, saying that the good spirit only confers benefits, and therefore does not require praying to: they are also fire-worshippers, and believe in the transmigration of souls. The Natchez worshipped the sun and kept a sacred fire continually burning; so that the sun and fire-worshipper of Persia, the Brahmins and Buddhists of India, as well as the Jews and the devil worshippers of Arabia, can each bring forward a claim of parentage! Their worship of fire is partial, but very peculiar; they take it as their "totem," or "tutelary Deity," and will not, on any account, treat a fire roughly, always replenishing and adjusting it with their hands, believing that if it is touched with a hatchet, knife, or any other instrument used in war, some one of the lodge will die. Other Indians take wolves, foxes, buffaloes, in fact, nearly every animal for their totem, being careful never to injure one of the species unneccessarily. When an Indian whose totem is the buffalo, kills one, he always makes a point of turning its head towards the south, which is intended as a sign to the other buffaloes, that their fellow bœuf is gone to the happy hunting grounds. Before going on a war-path, the Indian generally tries to get an omen from his totem.

I could not find out on what principles their divination was carried on, but if a warrior's path is crossed by his totem, nothing will persuade him to go on the war-path. The excessive superstition of the Indians has been one of the chief reasons of their

not having destroyed one another long ago; they will never go to war till their medicine men say the omens are propitious, even though they know their enemy is unprepared; and sometimes they will delay a whole year, neglecting the most favourable opportunities, before they strike a coup; whereas if they had not been trammelled by their absurd fancies, they might have committed twice the damage.

Their belief in transmigration of souls must be partial, for from the manner they treat their horses and dogs, you would not imagine they ever expected to occupy a like position.

As far as I could learn from the Missionary, the whole sum of their belief in a future state consists in the idea, that there are two paths that the spirits pursue after death, one to the south, leading to the happy hunting grounds, where buffalo swarm, and where they will never suffer from cold and hunger any more; the other to the north, where in a region of perpetual cold, the evil spirit passes a life of want and misery! rather reversing our belief as to the temperature of the place of eternal punishment. One tribe of the Dahcotàhs, or Sioux, have a belief which has a remarkable resemblance to the Mahometan creed, of the path pursued after death: they believe that the road to the village of the dead, where warmth and plenty exist, leads over a rock with an edge as sharp as a knife, on which only the good are able to keep their footing; the wicked fall off, and are severely flogged and worked by a relentless master, in a region of perpetual cold below, very much like the bridge as slight as a spider's web, over which the Faithful entered their paradise.

The Sioux are the hardest cases of all the American Indian tribes to convert, and the Missionary told me that during a continued residence of thirteen years he had only made one convert, and that *he* had recanted directly he was old enough to join his tribe on a war party. I once heard or read of a Missionary who was preaching to the Indians, and was trying to explain to them that man was driven from his happy hunting ground for eating an apple. The Indians could not understand its figurative meaning as a punishment for disobedience, but thought it meant literally for eating an apple. Being quite puzzled they said they should like to think of it. The next day they came to the Missionary, and said they had now discovered the reason, which was, that the great chief Adam was very wrong to have eaten the apple *raw;* he ought to have boiled it! The men display the greatest affection for their children when young, but it ceases as they grow older. Their wives they treat rather worse than their dogs, (lodge poling and abusing them without any sort of compunction,) and I cannot say more, for the life of an Indian dog is the most complete essence of misery it is possible to imagine. Suicide, that last refuge for miseries that are too great to bear, amongst most nations of the world, is very seldom had resource to by the wretched Indian squaws. They have a belief that they are punished for suicide in a future state. Hanging especially is very uncommon, as they have an idea that the persons so dying are destined to drag the tree from which they were suspended after them for ever in the land of spirits. If therefore they do "conclude" to hang themselves, they usually select the weakest

tree that will bear their weight, that the drag on their future enjoyment may be as light as possible.

The Indians are the greatest cowards in sickness, painting their faces black, and giving themselves up on the slightest attack. When a warrior dies they imagine that his spirit remains an occupant of his lodge four days after his death, as loth to leave the objects of his love. If during that time any of the other occupants of the lodge fall ill they do not attempt to cure them, saying that the spirit wishes to take its best beloved with it to the happy hunting grounds; and that it is its duty to go: it is a pretty idea, but when any epidemic is raging, it is the means of causing many deaths, which, by proper treatment, might have been prevented.

CHAPTER VI.

LAC-QUI-PARLE—PRAIRIE TO BIG-STONE LAKE.

We stayed at Lac-qui-Parle till the middle of September, recruiting our horses, and trying to persuade some half-breed guides to go with us. We had some difficulty, as the Indians were in rather bad temper just then, especially the Missouri Indians, amongst whom we were going. They had shot and scalped six American traders and trappers in the spring, and one of McLeod's men, although living with a Sioux squaw, had a very narrow escape. However, at last, we persuaded a plausible old man, named Rainville, to conduct us to the Buffalo. His father had been a half-bred trader, and his mother was a full-blooded Sioux, so that, excepting his dress, he was pretty nearly Indian. He certainly had all the bad qualities of one, and but for his being afraid of his own miserable existence, which he knew he would most probably lose if we caught him betraying us, I have no doubt he would have set the Indians upon us several times. He spoke a little bad French.

We started in the direction of the head-water of the Missouri; our party consisting of my two companions, Rainville, and an Indian he had taken with him, and myself. We had a light cart,—which, however, we left in two days, as the horse broke down,—

32810

the three horses we had brought with us from St. Paul's, two horses McLeod had kindly lent us, besides the Indian's horse, and two belonging to our guide Rainville. On the first night that we camped on a bluff above Beaver River there was a most magnificent thunder-storm. We were in a very exposed position, where some years before a whole family of Indians had been destroyed by lightning. A thunder-storm on the prairies is inexpressibly grand—the rolling, rattling reverberation of heaven's artillery is unimpeded by any of the causes that tend to deaden its sound in a wooded country, and the lightning hisses and crackles as distinctly as if fired close to one. The thunder rolled and muttered along the undulating surface of the prairie for miles and miles, without any hindrance whatever, and appeared to me to be much deeper toned than any I had ever heard. A storm at sea, with its concomitants of rushing winds and roaring waves, is as a *tout ensemble* more magnificent. On the prairie one's whole attention and admiration are centered in the elements above, and their grandeur becomes, if possible, more grand by the concentration. They are frequently very dangerous, as from the absence of all timber, the elevation of the lodge is apt to enact the part of conductor to the lightning.

The next day we travelled through a prairie without a stick six inches high, till the evening, when we camped near a small brook, and we had some difficulty to collect wood enough to cook the ducks we had shot during the day for our supper. Before rolling myself up for the night in my buffalo robe before the fire, it being my turn to look after the

horses, I walked out to see that their tethers were all right, and that they had plenty of grass. I remarked that they seemed a good deal scared, and on mentioning it to the guide he said it was only at the wolves, so I turned in without thinking any more about it; but on getting up in the morning we found one of the horses gone, and now we had no doubt it had been stolen; luckily the horses were so tethered in a hollow that the Indians could not have stampedoed them without exposing themselves to the risk of our seeing them; or I have no doubt they would have made "a raise" of the whole lot. Most likely the Indians were within a few yards of us during our dinner, and made "the raise" just as we were going to sleep. The Indians make their attacks either just after their enemies have turned in, or else an hour before daylight, when both men and horses are in their deepest sleep: however, all they wanted was our horses, as they knew we had nothing else worth taking, and were well armed with double-barrelled guns; and their dread of a two-shoot gun, or medicine iron, as they call a double-barrelled gun, is very great. The night had been very dark, and they had mistaken a small horse McLeod had lent us for mine, which was the same colour, and marked in the same manner. We had a long and diligent search, during which the young Indian who accompanied us, and who was an excellent fellow, discovered all sorts of trails, and made all manner of inexplicable signs, but could not discover the horse's trail, so that most likely he had been taken along the brook; and as it would have occupied two or three days to recover it, and it was but a worthless

animal, and our time precious, we gave him up, and continued our journey.

We afterwards found on our return to Lac-qui-Parle that some Indians had brought the horse back to McLeod, claiming a reward, and saying they had found him on the prairie; most probably they found it was too small to run buffaloes, and so tried the dodge of getting the reward. We travelled north-west till we reached the head-waters of James's River, a tributary of the Missouri, on the 16th, heartily disgusted. We had passed through a country that hardly a week before must have been swarming with buffalo. Their bones covered the ground, and the buffalo paths were as thick as the veins in a leaf, but we could not see a single head. We saw innumerable ducks, swans, and geese, and had very good sport in riding down the wolves. It must resemble hog-hunting in India very much, I imagine. We saw some antelopes at a great distance, but could not get a shot at them. I had some hours' rather exciting work stalking swans with the young Indian. There was a small lake quite covered with them; we crawled on our hands and knees for at least a mile, with great bunches of grass fastened to our heads that we might not attract the attention of the swans, who are very wary birds; but unfortunately just as we were within shot we put up some miserable little duck that had quite escaped our notice, and they frightened away the nobler game.

On our route to St. James's River we had to cross the Coteau des Prairies, the only elevation between the Atlantic and the Rocky Mountains; it rises in about 54° N., and runs 200 miles due south, ending

abruptly on the open prairie with a fine precipitous bluff of some hundred feet in height. It is about 40 miles broad, and its summit is about 2,000 feet above the level of the Gulf of Mexico. On one side rise, or rather descend, the tributaries of the Missouri, on the other, those of the Mississippi. The summit and sides are well wooded and watered, and the soil is said to be the richest in the whole continent of America; the view from the edge, which is quite abrupt, extends as far as the eye can reach, over a rolling treeless prairie bounded on one side by the Father of Waters, on the other by the Rocky Mountains.

We had now another hint of the commencement of winter, in the form of a severe frost and heavy fall of snow. We "humped" it along for three days, through the most bitter wind, that blew right through us. All our pork was consumed, and we had only just enough flour to give us each two small pieces of dough a day; and, to add to our difficulties, all the ducks and geese had gone south with the first frosts, and were not yet replaced from the north. During the bitter cold nights, the snow used to freeze so hard into our buffalo robes, that in the mornings they were like pieces of board; on the 18th, the wind was piercing—a regular "barber," and as we were not able to find wherewithal to make a fire, we pressed on till three o'clock, when luckily we came upon a small cluster of alder bushes overhanging a frozen pool. We warmed our flour, and washing it down with some stinking pool-water, started again slightly refreshed, intending to camp near some timber the guide knew of; but the young Indian, who had gone on before to

kindle a fire, came back to tell us there were ten lodges of Ogillillah Siouxs encamped there, and as they are the most expert horse-stealers of the whole Sioux nation, and, moreover, always hungry for scalps, we were pretty sure that if we camped near them they would make a "raise" of our spectral steeds; consequently we made tracks. About 6 P.M. we halted, and after tethering our exhausted cattle, we rolled ourselves up in our robes in the open prairie without a stick of wood to build a fire, half-frozen and half-famished, in which condition, only rather worse, we awoke next morning, and saddled our miserable cattle, whose hair, where it was not covered with frost, stood up like bristles, and kicked them along till about 2 P.M., when we mixed our last ration of flour with water, and ate the dough. We had now been thirty-six hours (most of the time on horseback) exposed to the most cutting wind, without breaking fast, save with the sour flour afore-mentioned, so, leaving the Indians to bring up three of the horses that were quite done up, we made the best of our way on to Lac-qui-Parle, which we reached about ten o'clock, and were not loth to partake once more a comfortable meal of ducks and potatoes. As we had counted upon falling in with buffalo in four or five days, or at all events on finding plenty of wild fowl, we had only taken a sufficient supply of pork and tea for seven or eight days: if, therefore, we had not turned back the very day we did, and had remained out three or four days longer, which we certainly should have done if the horses had been stronger, it would have gone very hard with us.

Many Indians and trappers perish every year, on these North-West prairies, from hunger, and from the sudden snow-storms and migrations of the game, accompanied by a thermometer 10° or 12° below zero. The buffalo are the only food they can in any way count upon, and they have become so much scarcer of late years, that in tracks of fifty or a hundred miles, where a few years ago they swarmed, you now do not see one.

On our return to Lac-qui-Parle, we found that most of the Indians were off on their hunt, not leaving more than twenty or thirty lodges. We could not make up our minds to leave the country without seeing the bison in his native wilds, and we determined on another expedition, due north, contrary to McLeod's advice, who said we should be most probably caught by the winter, and were sure to suffer from want of food. We procured fresh horses from McLeod, our own being "used up," and left in pawn. *Faute de mieux* we were forced to take our former rascally old guide, Joseph Rainville, and as he professed to be in fear of the Indians, he would only go on condition that we hired his son and cousin, devils many degrees more lazy and worse than himself; they were a bad lot, and we had to watch them like lynxes, to prevent their playing us false.

It appeared that after our departure, on our first trip, some chiefs, of a different band of Sioux, who were not there when we made our presents before, had gone to McLeod and complained that we were gone to hunt their buffalo, and very likely drive them out of their country, and had not made them any presents, and threatened to send and prevent our

hunting, if McLeod did not make them some present: he promised that on our return we should do so. One morning, therefore, about twelve old chiefs assembled in the hut, and we gave them some forty yards of calico, and some very bad tobacco, with which they were enchanted, and said we might kill all the buffalo in the country, if we could; after that, they invited us to a dog-feast—but in the absence of dog, they gave us duck, a change we did not regret. The feast is worth describing. When we arrived at the chief's lodge, "The Beaver's Tail,"—which we entered by a hole like the entrance to a beehive, we found an atmosphere of smoke and smell, not of the pleasantest; about ten old warriors were squatting in tailor-fashion round the fire, over which was hanging the pot, containing some twenty or thirty canvass-back ducks, each of them nearly the size of three of our domestic ones, and presided over by Dohumnêh, or the "Prolific Pumpkin," a rather pretty squaw and the youngest and favourite wife of the "Beaver's Tail." Directly we were seated, great wooden platters were placed before us, loaded with duck enough to have dined ten people in England. The warriors dispensed with plates, dipping nature's knife and fork into the caldron. Such appetites I never saw before, and never wish to see again; great, fat, half-boiled ducks disappeared like so many snipes, and handfulls of grease, of the consistency of thick arrowroot, were baled in, and daubed over the face and person with a most magnanimous disregard to personal appearance. After eating for about half-an-hour, during which they "swelled visibly," the old Beaver Tail gave in, and

with a grunt of repletion fell back in a reclining position; the others evidently feeling very uneasy, soon followed his example, and the miserable remains of the feast were removed, to be disposed of by the squaws, children, and dogs, in turn. After we had sat some time, the old chief produced a medicine pipe, which, with the accompanying kinni-kinnik bag, he handed to the youngest chief present, who loaded and lighted it, and after turning the bowl and blowing a cloud to each of the four quarters of the heavens, handed it to the old Beaver. The Indians, on any great occasion, make a point of propitiating the Great Spirit by turning the bowl of the pipe to the four quarters of the heavens. After the old Beaver had taken six or seven puffs, he passed it to us, and we, doing likewise, passed it to the others, by whom it was inhaled with a grunt of pleasure. When an Indian lights a pipe, it is always handed round to the company present, taking the same direction as the wine does with us, viz. with the sun.

After we had smoked a short time in silence, the old Beaver rose, and in the unmusical language of his tribe, made more so by his disgusting state of repletion, began a complimentary speech, saying what pleasure it gave him to see his white brethren, (this was rather a *double entendre*, for the old villain was supposed to have been one of those who had killed the Americans in the spring, and most probably had some of their hair hanging from his leggings at that moment!) and wishing to know what we had come for, and whether we had brought anything for him. When he had done speaking, a grunt of acquiescence went round, when we, through

the interpreter, told him, that our Great White Mother, having heard of the fame of the warriors of the great Dahcotah nation, had said, "Go and see whether their warriors equal mine;" and that we had crossed the Big Salt Lake, and come from the rising sun, and that our Big Mother, knowing that her Red Brothers liked tobacco and powder, had sent them some. On this we produced a small quantity of tobacco, and some powder, and paint, and beads, which latter were immediately handed to the squaws, to be worked into ornaments. After this we struck up a great friendship, and a small flask of firewater being produced, the Indian reserve disappeared, and they chatted, and joked, and laughed. One old chief, "Le Croup Percé," grew quite affectionate; he said that he not only loved his white brethren, but his white sisters and mothers, and grandmothers!—in fact, all his white relations. I had taken a great fancy to the Beaver's Tail's pipe, and he was equally struck with a shirt of mine, of a sort of bed-curtain pattern, which being worn rather threadbare, I had intended committing to the flames; on my proposing to make an exchange, he was delighted, and in a moment my shirt was adorning his greasy person, and I was reduced to Indian costume with a vengeance—and indeed, before we broke up, nearly all our available garments were exchanged for pipes, mocassins, &c., and we returned quite destitute of superfluous clothing.

Amongst the Indians it is considered a manly accomplishment to be able to eat a great quantity; and a young warrior, eating for reputation, will consume as much as 20 lbs. of fresh meat at one sitting.

I knew one old scoundrel, "The Old Racoon," who ate 120 potatoes, and would have eaten as many more if his friends had not stopped him; not from any regard to his own good, but from the fear that none would be left for them. During the few days that we remained at Lac-qui-Parle, by liberal presents of bad tobacco and a little paint, we made great friends with "Le Cerf qui Bût," (the Elk that stands at bay,) the most distinguished warrior of the Sissiton band, and in fact of the whole Sioux nation; he wore thirty-six eagle's plumes, for thirty-six coups struck in war. Striking à coup is considered quite as honourable as taking a scalp. When an enemy falls, the first warrior that can rush up and stick his knife into the body, or strike it with his tomahawk, has what is called "struck a coup," and is allowed to wear an eagle's plume in commemoration of the deed. "The Elk that stands at bay" was a remarkably fine, well-made fellow, of about forty, with a chest like a buffalo bull. I persuaded him, in exchange for powder and paint, to part with his war-robe, adorned with paintings of his most remarkable feats; and through the interpreter I made him describe the battles, which he did in the most animated manner, with a great deal of very clever pantomimic action, creeping on his knees through the lodge, when he wanted to show how he stole unawares on his enemies, and then again drawing himself up to his full height, with the air of a prince, to show how he behaved when taken prisoner. He gave me an account of a Chippeway he had scalped some five weeks before. His leg had been broken, and he lay perfectly helpless in the prairie, his friends having

left him. He was perfectly unmoved when his enemy approached, but when he felt the knife round his top-knot, he shrank from it, which the Elk said was a pity, as otherwise he had shown himself a brave warrior. On inquiring whether he lived after being scalped, he said, No; for that before he left him he passed his knife into his heart; most likely quite slowly, and taunting him the whole time. Towards the finale of his story, when he came to the scalping part of the business, he got very excited, and went through all the motions of that pleasant operation.

The Sioux are very cruel in war, torturing their prisoners, if they take any, (which, however, does not often happen,) in the most inhuman manner, mutilating and hacking them to pieces, and sometimes, in their savage excitement, even eating pieces of the flesh. The Sioux scalp in a more bloodthirsty manner than other Indians, not contenting themselves with the mere scalp, but when practicable taking the features,—nose, lips, ears, &c.

The Indian country is said by those who know anything about it to be in a very ticklish state. The Indians dislike the Americans, and with good reason, and they only want an Ossiola, a Tecumséh, or a Blackhawk, to make them forget their mutual animosities, and unite them against their common enemy, the white man, to commence a war to the knife along the whole frontier. The Dahcotah nation alone could muster 1,500 mounted warriors in a fortnight, and a proportionate number might be brought to bear on the whole Indian frontier down to Texas. One insurmountable obstacle, however, exists, which will always prevent large masses of Indians acting in

concert, viz. the want of a commissariat. A warrior cannot carry food for more than a fortnight, and all that time his wife and children would be starving, unless a certain number of young men were left to supply the lodges with meat. However, notwithstanding these difficulties, if the Indians get really aroused, the injury they could inflict on the frontier settlements in a good deal less time than a fortnight would be considerable. The only way the Americans have been able to succeed in Indian warfare hitherto has been by fostering the hereditary enmities, and raising the hope of revenge in one tribe against another. This was done to an iniquitous extent during Blackhawk's war, when, after the Americans found their dragoons had no chance against Indians on their native prairies, and were harassed to death in their attempts to catch them, the whole Sioux nation were let loose upon the Saxes and Foxes, and the whole tribe decimated, the remainder being driven across the Missouri, where they are getting gradually exterminated by the Sioux and Pawnees.

When a chief wishes to collect his warriors, he ornaments a pipe with wampum, and with a little bag containing tobacco, and sends it round by a mounted warrior. The colour of the bag implies the object of the message, whether they are to assemble for the council or the war-path. Red and black signify *war;* blue and green, *peace.* If the warrior smokes the pipe, he signifies his assent to the proposition, whatever it may be, and hears the rendezvous from the runner; if he refuses to smoke, it is understood that he declines going, and the messenger goes on his way. When a warrior wants to go on a war-path, it is

always considered the correct thing for his relations and intimate friends to accompany him; and by pleasant reunions of the kind cheerful little scalping-parties are continually kept going on. If a tribe is at war with another tribe a warrior may go into the enemy's country on his own hook, without the leave of his chief; but if two tribes are at peace, the chief's leave is always requisite before he can make an incursion into his neighbour's country for the sake of "raising hair," however hard up he may be for it.

On October 23d, contrary to McLeod's advice, we started again on another expedition, steering due north. We expected to meet buffalo in seven or eight days, but were again disappointed: snow and frost had set in, and it was bitterly cold. The first day's journey lay through a prairie lately burnt, covered with enormous granite boulders, and bones of buffalo. The white granite against the burnt black ground had a most strange appearance, like vast skeletons. The prairie immediately after a fire is jet black; but after a few weeks' wind the black particles get blown away, and the country is left a sort of stone colour. In crossing this part of the prairie we saw an extraordinary mirage, the whole country having the appearance of one vast lake. I had always imagined mirages were caused by vapours rising from a heated ground, and did not expect to see one during an intense frost. We crossed the St. Peter's River, and Rivière de Pomme de Terre. The sides of the latter were very boggy, and it was painful to witness the struggles and exertions of the mules and horses in crossing. Some of them were more than half an

hour going a hundred yards, sinking up to their girths at every spring, where they would remain half-buried till they had collected strength for the next spring. We saw several large white prairie wolves, but they were too wild to hunt. We camped at the Big-stone Lake, and slept in the lodge of an Indian (who was on his way to the Buffalo). There was rather a motley crowd in the lodge—the Brave himself, who was recovering from a bullet-wound in the back, (rather suspicious,) his two wives, two mothers-in-law and his own mother, six or seven squalling children, and about twice the number of squeaking puppies. The bouquet of this mixture, with the addition of the buffalo-dung fire, did not at all resemble the "sweet south playing upon a bank of roses," and was too much for my olfactory nerves, and I preferred the open air. I doubt whether a family party composed of so many discordant parts in England would quite come under the head of "happy and united!"

Big-stone Lake is about forty miles long, varying from one to three in breadth; the sides are formed by precipitous granite cliffs of three or four hundred feet in height. At its northern extremity it is connected by a swamp with another lake of the same size, called "Lac Travers." The waters from the one lake frequently flow into the other. The waters from Big-stone Lake run by the Chippeway and St. Peter's River into the Mississippi, thence into the Gulf of Mexico; the waters of Lake Travers run by the River Shian and Red River into Lake Winnipeg and Hudson's Bay—one due north, the other due south; yet such are the extraordinary currents of the

ocean that the waters of the former are carried by the Gulf-stream up the coast of America, till about the latitude of Philadelphia, and the waters of the latter carried by the Arctic current down the coast to about the latitude of Boston; at these two points they strike off to the east, after respective journeys of 5,000 or 6,000 miles, and mingle on the great banks of Newfoundland. I doubt whether they would recognise each other distinctly. According to calculations that have been made by the highest authorities on these subjects, a globule of water from Big-stone Lake and a globule of water from Lake Travers, (which globules might originally have been formed out of the same globule,) might, after respective journeys of 5,000 miles, meet and reunite on the Great Banks of Newfoundland, after a separation of about 100 or 150 days—three or four months.

CHAPTER VII.

PRAIRIE.

We continued to press onward through an open prairie, burnt as far as the eye could reach. The country was as black as pitch, and every now and then we came upon heaps of buffalo bones, where some band had been overtaken by the fire. A burnt prairie has a very diminishing effect on a landscape, rendering it impossible to judge of distances or the size of different objects; also on horses, when they have been on it for two or three days. We overtook an Indian village on the march; the men carried nothing, but the women and dogs had enormous burdens; the latter could hardly creep along under them, but woe betide any unfortunate cur that lagged behind, or tried to lie down: some wizened old squaw would make a rush at him with a lodge-pole, and strike hard enough to break every bone in its body. The buffalo robes, full of puppies and children, with their little red noses peeping out in a confused mass, had a most ludicrous effect. At night, when we camped, three Indians came in: they had also come from Lac-qui-Parle, and were on their way to join the Indian village that was hunting on the Shian, whither we were going; consequently they joined our company. One was a very old Indian, and another was an old friend, Le Bœuf Levé. Their reserve when

they first came in was very remarkable. Although it was bitter cold, and we had a fine fire, having brought wood with us from Big-stone Lake, and were eating largely of pork and flour, whilst these warriors had not tasted anything for a distance of one hundred miles but half a skunk (or *bête puant*, as the half-breeds call them), the most offensively nasty of all animals, yet when they came in they sat down about a hundred yards from the fire, and did not attempt to address us, or warm themselves, till we invited them to do so, (which we did not do until we had quite finished,) when they gave a grunt of acquiescence, and, although shaking like leaves with the cold, very leisurely came near the fire, as if they were not in the least hurry to get warm, and began to eat; but certainly, when they *did* once begin, it was a case of "cut and come again" with a vengeance.—I mentally ejaculated with the landlord, whose visitor, eating voraciously of a round of beef, said, "That's the way we do it, landlord; cut, and come again," answered, "Cut it you may; but come again you never shall." They consumed more of our pork in five minutes than we should have done in five days.

For two or three consecutive days we "racked" along as fast and as well as our horses would carry us, most of the time through burnt prairies; the weather was bitterly cold, and it had snowed more or less every day since we left Lac-qui-Parle. The excitement of the Indians as the tracks of buffalo became fresher was very great. At last, one morning, we came upon the gory remains of several bulls and cows that the Indians had killed a few days before. Soon after we saw the Indians, who had pressed on

before, on the top of a slight eminence that commanded a view of the prairie for many miles in every direction, waving their buffalo robes, and galloping about like wild demons. On joining them we found them in the greatest state of delight. They pointed out something to us at a great distance, but we could see nothing. At length, after some time, we saw a sort of flash of the sun, as if a reflection from water. On our guides coming up they told us that what we saw was some Indian sent out from the village to meet our friends, to give them good tidings of the buffalo; that although we could not see him on account of the distance, he could see us, being on an elevation against the light, and had flashed a looking-glass to attract attention. It is a plan always pursued by the Indians, and they say they can see it at a distance of ten miles. It is a fact that the sappers surveying from the summit of the Big-Cheviot, saw with distinctness the reflector of another party surveying on Ben McDhae, distant more than one hundred miles. I have heard old prairie hunters affirm, that on a dark night a flint and steel well struck can be seen fifteen or sixteen miles off; and that, on a still night, when there is no wind, an Indian, by putting his ear to the ground, will hear a man or a buffalo breathing at the distance of three miles—rather a long distance certainly, but I believe anything of the natural gifts of a savage, who, both for his safety and means of subsistence, is so entirely dependent upon them, that by constant practice they are brought to a pitch of perfection of which we have no idea.

In the evening we met the Indian who had flashed the glass. He was a boy about fifteen, the son of the

old chief who was with us. He had been out two days and nights from the village, quite alone, to meet his father, and bring him some pimecan, or buffalo-meat pounded up with grease. The meeting was very affectionate, and the chief immediately adorned his son with a blue surtout with brass buttons, like a parish beadle's, that had been given him by the American agent, and was too small for his obese body. He said buffalo were plenty, both cows and bulls, and that the Indians had killed fifty the day before.

Some of our party saw buffalo next day at a great distance off, and the delight was very great. We continued our route to the banks of the Shian, where we came to the village of Indians, consisting of about twenty lodges we were in search of. Meat was plentiful, and every available pole and stick was adorned with flakes of meat hung up to dry. Here our guides, who had for some days been very restive and impertinent on account of our abusing them for their beastly laziness and the slowness of our progress, thought fit to leave us and to take up their abode in some one of the Indian lodges. It was a bitter cold night, snow falling thick, with a piercing wind, and we had to remain in great misery, without fire or food, watching our traps, whilst within a quarter of a mile were the Indian lodges, and our rascally guides gorging themselves on fat cow. There were two or three score of sneaking, thieving-looking wretches loping about our little camp and laughing at us, and I have no doubt insulting us grossly, only luckily we did not understand them. At that time I would as soon have shot an Indian as I would a dog that wanted to bite me. I could perfectly understand the feeling of Ruxton's men, "Kill Buck" and

La Boute, who would as soon shoot an Indian as "any other varmint."

Next morning, on turning out, stiff and cold, we found our guides were missing. We entered several lodges to try and discover them; we were most hospitably treated at all of them, masses of half-boiled meat being invariably offered. Our researches proving unavailing, we got hold of an old chief, and taking him to our camp, we gave him some tobacco and sugar, and tried to impress upon him that we wanted to go to his lodge; I don't think he clearly understood what we meant, but to prevent mistakes, we shifted our baggage there, and took up our residence with him. We remained in his lodge six or seven days, and during the whole of that time, though continually mobbed by Indians, we did not lose the value of a sixpence. Of course our intercourse was entirely by signs, and those of an obscure description, but as it snowed hard during the whole of that time, and we had some tea and coffee, and the small remains of the flour, we managed tolerably well. We held a continual levee, and there were never less than twenty or thirty Indians, looking at us most intently, particularly during our meals. The coffee and tea were great treats to them; the latter we made twice, and then boiled, and the former we kept continually boiling from morning till night. The chief, in whose lodge we had taken up our residence, was the finest specimen of an Indian I ever saw, both in appearance and nature; he was called "Wah-ton-she," which signifies the "good man," in consequence of his amiable qualities; his affection for his wife and children was very remarkable, especially for the latter, and there was one little boy, about two years old,

whom he used to nurse and cram with fat cow till it could hardly breathe, and when it arrived at that state of repletion that one expected it to explode every moment, he used to get a lump of fat, and grease it well about the digestive organs, which seemed to give it great relief, and then lay it down before the fire till it subsided into something like its natural shape.

The names of the different tribes, as well as the names of individuals, all have some distinct meaning. "Dahcotah," the name of the Sioux nation, signifies, as nearly as it can be translated, "unum e pluribus," "non pareil." "Ahaton," the name of the Chippeways, signifies "the men who live about the Great Fall," meaning the Fall of St. Anthony. The Indian name of the Pawnees signifies the nation with "big stomachs," "muckle-whames;" "Iroquois" signifies the "chief of men."

The prairie Indians are most completely dependent on the buffalo. Everything that supports existence is derived from them; lodges, beds, robes, mocassins, leggings, saddles, are all made from their skins; powder flasks are made from their horns, needles from the small bones, their ribs make bows, and the arrows are tipped with bone. When they are plentiful the Indians live in clover, and when scarce they starve. No wonder they think and talk of nothing else, from the time they can first prattle till they are old veterans. It appears to me, that many of the arguments adduced in favour of the Asiatic descent of the American Indians (founded on a similarity of customs and habits with the inhabitants of Asia) are unsound. Between two races of men living entirely by hunting, there must in any age be a great similarity of tastes and pursuits; the

thoughts and anxieties of both must be continually about their safety and the means of procuring their food and clothing. The habits and thoughts of the hunter on the plains of Asia and on the shores of the Danube must be much the same as the thoughts and habits of the hunter on the shores of the Mississippi or the prairies of America.

The Indians have no idea of time or space that I could discover: they talk of so many moons and of when the sun is at a certain altitude. Their calendar of months is rather curious:—January, month of storms; February, month when racoons travel; March, month "mal aux yeux;" April, the month that the game begins to arrive; May, when trees are in leaf; June (in lower country), strawberry month, (in upper country), the month when the buffalo run; July, month of ripe cherries; August, corn month; September, month when flowers on the Prairie blossom; October, month when they grillé the rice; November, deer month; December, month of "I forget what."

During two or three days when the snow prevented our hunting, we remained almost entirely in the lodge, trying to understand or be understood by the pets of the Dahcotah fancy. They seemed very good fellows, and enjoyed a good laugh, laughing when we did, and we laughed when they did. They kept continually smoking kinni-kinnik, and drinking sweet tea and coffee. Some young men had been sent out in the morning to find the exact locality of the buffalo, and what direction they were taking, in order that the movements of the village might be directed accordingly. They had strict injunctions not to hunt or be seen by the animals, lest they

might change their route. However, one young fellow, thinking nobody could see him, and having tender recollections of buffalo tongue and tender hump, did hunt and kill a cow. This performance having come to the ears of the chiefs in the evening, the warriors or soldiers of the tribe, who are bound to enforce the laws of the small republic, went to the young man's lodge, and slit it all to pieces, broke his gun, and in fact brought him and his whole family to great grief and dolour—very pleasant on a winter's night, with the thermometer below zero.

On November 6th, in consequence of certain news of the direction the buffalo were taking, the village moved about ten miles north. Our guides did not come near us, and moreover had evidently tried to persuade the Indians to insult us; for our young Indian, who had hitherto been very amiable, became bumptious, and watched us packing the mules and horses without proffering the least assistance, and when they were ready, jumped on a horse and made signs for me to drive them. This was too much of a joke, so I made him get off, and took his place. As there were a great many Indians watching us, he felt the humiliation very much, seemed inclined to draw his knife, and muttered some harmless imprecation on my head.

In the afternoon two bulls came right into camp, and were killed in most slovenly style with bows and arrows by the Indians, each getting, I should think, twenty or thirty arrows. One poor brute in particular would not die; the Indians kept firing at him at a distance of fifteen or twenty yards, and the arrows entered the flesh about three inches. Every

time he was struck he gave a kind of plaintive bellow and tried to charge, but was too weak. He would have been a long time dying, if N—— had not gone up with his "two-shoot gun" and put him out of his misery. It is a painful sight watching a buffalo on his last legs. He seems to get angry with the weakness that is creeping upon him, and stamps impatiently as if trying to shake it off. He never lies down when badly wounded, but stands till he drops; and when once down never rises again. Directly this unfortunate beast was down, the cowardly savages, who a few minutes before dared not approach within twenty yards, and rushed away at the slightest attempt at a charge, sprang upon him, and kicked him, and stuck their knives into him, with savage delight. (I could quite imagine them doing the same to an enemy, whenever they had a chance.) The butchering was done in masterly style, but was disgusting in the extreme. His tongue was out before he was dead, and they were chewing his kidneys almost before his heart ceased beating! Altogether the proceeding, in barbarity, reminded me of an Andalusian bull-fight; although there is even less excuse for the enlightened European than for the wild Indian.

The next morning, before daylight, we were awoke by yells and war-whoops, succeeded by the shrieks of squaws and the howls of the dogs. We imagined at first that some hostile Indians had made their appearance. Our friend Wah-ton-she sprang up and rushed out; but in a few minutes he returned, accompanied by about twenty warriors, and twice the number of squaws and dogs. The "Braves"

seemed to be in a most excited state, and made most significant signs to us of somebody being dead, and then drew their fingers round their scalp with anything but pleasing expressions of countenance. From this we were led to imagine that some of the village had come to grief. The squaws and dogs having been turned out, the council-pipe was lit and handed round, and an old chief began a sort of monotonous recital, accompanied by a great deal of pantomimic action, as of men riding and dogs dragging the lodge-poles; then he imitated men shooting, then of somebody being killed, and then the never-to-be-mistaken signs of the scalping process. His narration, every now and then, was interrupted by the "Ho ho's" and smothered expressions of his companions, who seemed to be working themselves into a very uneasy state of mind. After the old chief had finished, some others spoke in turn, pointing to the sun and to the north. At length, after a good deal of noise and a great deal of smoking, the council broke up, and we were left in peace. We of course could only form conjectures as to their meaning; but on the return of our guides a few days afterwards, we heard all about it. It appeared that during the night some Indians, being out after the buffalo, had fallen in with some Sioux dogs and lodge-poles without their owners. This of couse raised their suspicions, and "harking back" upon the trail of the dogs, they at length came upon the scalped and mutilated remains of several Sioux men, women, and children. It appeared that they had been on their march to join the band of Indians with whom we were staying, and had been attacked and scalped by

some of their enemies. The Indians knew from the direction the victors had taken, and also from the mode of scalping, &c., that their enemies in this instance were the Blackfeet.

The Blackfeet are the fiercest and most powerful of all the north-west tribes, except the Sioux, to which nation they formerly belonged, but separated on some dispute about the hunting grounds. The head chief of the Blackfeet is an English half-breed, a son of a Mr. Bird, who for many years was Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company. His mother was a Blackfeet squaw, and he acquired such a taste for prairie life that no entreaty availed to make him give it up. It is a curious fact that the head chief of the Crows, also a very powerful tribe, and originally one and the same with the Sioux and Blackfeet, is a runaway mulatto from the States. The knowledge acquired amongst the whites, combined with a determined disposition, have enabled him to become the head warrior of the tribe. The Sioux are genuine sons of Esau; their hand is against every man, and every man's hand is against them, and they are at war with every one of their neighbours. The Blackfeet, Crows, Pawnees, or Gros Ventres as the half-breeds call them, Chippeways, Assiniboins, Mandans, Saxes, and Foxes form a cordon all round the Sioux country, but, owing to the central position of the latter, and to their being more powerful than any of their enemies taken singly, they are enabled to show more scalps at their war-dances than are missed from their council fires.

November 9th.—To-day, to our great relief, our guides returned. Finding that we were getting on

very comfortably with the Indians, (the heads of the village having regularly taken us under their charge, never allowing the young men to annoy us in any way,) and seeing that we went out hunting, and made no attempt to discover or bring them back, they began, I suppose, to fear that we should, without awaiting their return, get some Indians to guide us to the Red River Settlement, distant about 800 miles, in which case they would not only have lost their money, but we should have taken their horses and left them to shift for themselves. They came back to us in a most penitent mood, and begged our pardon, which we at first refused to give, but at last granted with great magnanimity. If they had not returned we should have been in rather an unpleasant "fix," for although there is no doubt that we should have been able to make the Indians understand enough to guide us to the Red River, yet, although they were very civil to us whilst we were with them, very likely when we had left, the guides would have persuaded some of them to pursue and rob us, in which case we should have been in rather an unpleasant position. I never could quite understand the reason of the Indians treating us so well. I fancy it arose from a superstitious dread of us. Few of them had ever seen white men before, and then only as traders and soldiers, and had no conception of their travelling for pleasure and amusement. Knowing from our dress that we were not soldiers, and from the presents we made them that we were not traders; seeing also that the half-breeds were our servants (which mystified them more than anything else, as they have no ideas of domestic

servitude,) and having besides a great respect for the half-breeds, they respected us in proportion to the control he exercised over them; and altogether, being quite mystified, they looked upon us, as they do upon everything they don't understand, as "wahkan," or great medicine, and treated us as such

As it was now in our power to return, we determined not to lose a moment about it. When we left the Indian village on the Shian, we were 350 miles from Lac-qui-Parle, 600 from St. Paul, and 1,400 from St. Louis. The ground was covered with snow, and winter had regularly set in, and we had the pleasant prospect of travelling that distance through frost and snow with the thermometer below zero, and very little chance of finding a sufficiency of wood or food for the first 400 miles. Whilst our beasts were being caught and packed we took leave of our friend Wah-ton-she, his squaw and children, especially the youngest and fattest, who, if he ever gets over the unsymmetrical effect of excessive indulgence in beef-doings at too early an age, may make a great chief and eat his way up to distinction. We gave our host all the powder and shot we could spare, and needles, thread, and paint and ribbon enough to ensure his family's cutting a dash for the next year or two. Amongst other things we gave him a pair of large horse-pistols, which would never go off, a peculiarity so far fortunate that if they had they would probably have burst. Wah-ton-she was by far the finest specimen of the North American Indian, both in person and nature, that we saw. He was famed through his tribe for his gentleness and amiability, never hurting anything unnecessarily, and

not even beating his squaw or dogs. His innate sense of the law of honour and the rights of hospitality was great; for though he had every opportunity and temptation to rob us, and the doing so would have been attended with no kind of disgrace, but on the contrary would have made him rich, we did not whilst with him lose the value of a sixpence. When our horses were ready we shook hands, and (as is recorded of the unsuccessful meeting of the bishops of the Eastern and Western Churches at Rome to settle some intricate theological dispute) "parted with mutual respect."

In the afternoon we "ran" and killed a large white wolf, as big as a large Newfoundland dog. Camped on the open prairie without a stick of wood, all our tea, coffee, flour, and pork were expended, and we supped on tough bull half-broiled, washed down with snow water.

The next morning on awaking we found seven large bulls close to camp. We "ran" them and killed them all, our guides, I believe, doing the greater part of the execution; they were better mounted, and more up to the sport. Running buffalo for the first time, and the sensation of galloping alongside a brute that appears as large as a haystack, is novel and exciting; but after running them a few times the sport loses its excitement, and for my part I would rather have ten minutes with a pack of hounds across the worst country in England than kill all the buffalo on the prairie. The bulls generally allow you to approach within 500 yards before they start off *à la course*. A good horse will catch them in half a mile, and once up and alongside the pleasure is over, as

you keep on loading and firing as fast as you can at a distance of five or six yards till the animal drops or stops, when you dismount and finish him at your leisure. The death-struggles of such an enormous brute (and they die very hard) are most painful to witness. The sport is just dangerous enough to keep up a wholesome excitement, and to originate tales of hair-breadth escapes without number. It is not nearly so dangerous as shooting in cover with five or six excitable sportsmen. There is the chance of your horse putting his foot into a fox or badger-earth; there is the chance of the bull stopping suddenly and turning round, in which case most probably he receives the horse on his horns, and you make a voyage of discovery over his head; and there is the chance, if you are fortunate, of his running at you when he is wounded. I only speak of these dangers from hearsay, as all the bulls I saw were in far too great a hurry to get away to have any idea of turning upon their pursuers. We saw innumerable prairie wolves. They hunt the buffalo in packs of from 50 to 100, hanging on the skirts of the herds, and picking off the sick and weak, particularly the cows after calving, and the young calves. Their sagacity in pursuing their prey is very remarkable. Five or six wolves will chase a cow, and whilst one keeps jumping at her nose to occupy her attention, the others try to hamstring her by biting the sinew above the hock. The old she-wolves will catch the young calves by the ears, and drag them to their burrows to teach their young, as a cat does her kittens, to worry their prey.

When one considers the number and pertinacity of their enemies it is quite a matter of wonder that

there are any buffalo left. The Indians and half-breeds hunt them continuously, and kill all indiscriminately—the cows heavy in calf, and the calves before they can stand. They act on the same principle as we do with regard to woodcocks and other birds of passage, killing them whenever they get a chance, knowing that though *they* may spare them, the next Indian that gets a chance will destroy them.

There is no doubt that the immense herds of buffalo, once so common on the Western Prairies, have within the last twenty years become much less numerous; this, of course, is very much owing to their enormous destruction by the Indians and half-breeds, and the consequent diminishing of the whole species; and it is also very much owing to the buffalo having been driven from their feeding grounds, and forced to emigrate far north, to a climate unsuited to their nature. The country between the Gulf of Mexico and the river Plate once swarmed with buffalo, whereas now hardly one is to be met with;* and far north, on the banks of the Columbia and the northern parts of Oregon, where twenty years ago not a buffalo was to be seen, herds of thousands now roam about in comparative peace. This expatriation of the bison, however, will cause its destruction almost quicker than the constant though limited attacks of the white man or the Indian. During the short warm summers the buffalo roam so far north, that frequently before they can return to more temperate regions they get caught by the snows of winter, and perish by thousands. The buffalo have

* Though I have since heard they still exist in countless numbers on those prairies.

a great dislike to timber, and never approach it but for shelter. It is a curious fact also, that they have a peculiar dislike to the tinkling of the bells of the domestic cows, and have never been known to return to any neighbourhood where they have once been heard.

Upwards of 100,000 robes pass though the hands of the different traders during the year, and as they are all the skins of cows (the bulls' hides are too thick and heavy for use, except as carpets for the Indians to sleep upon), and as, moreover, only those killed during the six months of autumn and winter can be used for the purpose of clothing, those killed in the spring and summer being of no use to the traders, some faint idea of the enormous annual slaughter may be formed. According to this calculation, (and it is from a return made to the Congress some years ago,) at least 400,000 cows and bulls must be destroyed during the year, of which number about nine-tenths are supposed to be cows; this is exclusive of the thousands killed by the wolves and the rigours of winter. The Indians say that they themselves and the buffalo will go under together, and they are certainly running a neck and neck race for it now, and the pace is beginning to tell; and unless the Indians can be civilized and the buffalo domesticated, (circumstances equally improbable,) such will most certainly be the case. At present the Indian not only considers work an evil, but absolutely a dishonour: he considers war and the chase the only pursuits worthy of a great chief, (ideas, by the way, not very dissimilar to those of our feudal ancestors,) and leaves the hoe and the spade to the squaw and the white man.

The future of the race of red men in North America is very clouded; they will not embrace agriculture and the arts and sciences of civilized life, and even when they do, they enter into a race in which they must soon get either distanced or trampled on. How can the Indian, who in his barbarity and ignorance raises with the greatest difficulty his scanty crops, (even from rich virgin soil of the prairie,) hope to exist in competition with an unscrupulous race of white men, his superiors in intellect and energy, and aided by all the arts and sciences of an enlightened civilization, who can get more return from one week's labour than he does from that of the whole year, and who, controlled by no compunction or pity when the dollar and Indian are weighed in opposite scales, does not hesitate one moment in turning out what they consider the useless incumbrances of land which may be turned to better purposes? A race of shepherds, as amongst the pastoral tribes of Northern Asia, where they are in the habit of returning annually to the same pasturages with their flocks and herds, or a race of savages, in some way dependent on the cultivated fruits of the soil, as in South America and Mexico, has a better chance of attaining a certain amount of *civilization*, than a wild race of hunters, who are bound to no particular spot, either by interest or habit, but whose only guide in their wanderings is the likelihood of procuring a sufficiency of food and clothing, and whose every idea is opposed to that first indispensable component of civilization—a fixed residence.

The Sioux, of all the tribes of Indians, are said to

display the least aptitude for civilization, or for a fixed place of abode: their ruling passion, of a wandering life, is strong in death. It is said that not a single half-breed of demi-Sioux origin has been known entirely to relinquish the prairie life, notwithstanding all its privations and dangers. This is not the case with the half-breeds of the tribes of wood Indians. At Bradford, in Upper Canada, there is a large settlement of Seneca and Potowatamie half-breeds and Indians, who cultivate the soil, build houses, and behave as respectable members of society; but then in Canada the Indians have had the advantage of a government that has some regard to its treaties, and, moreover, has had the power, as well as the will, to prevent any infringement of them by private individuals, which is not the case in the States. In the States, again, some of the tribes of southern wood Indians, the Cherokees, Chickasaws, and Choctaws, have imbibed a considerable amount of civilization, and cultivate corn and potatoes and breed cattle with some advantage. The Choctaws and Cherokees, particularly, who inhabit the western frontier of Arkansas, are slave-holders, and have a newspaper published in their own language. Their civilization, however, is entirely owing to accidental circumstances, which can never be brought to bear on the prairie Indians. And even their future is far from bright, unless they get very quickly fused with the white race. These two tribes were originally the lords of Virginia, and were gradually, half by force and half by treaty, deprived of their lands, till they had only a small reserve left. Here they remained many years, surrounded on all sides by civili-

zation, which had made gigantic strides, and got far to their west; thus, deprived of their hunting-grounds, and their means of subsistence by the chase, they were obliged, for the means of existence, to take to agriculture. In this state they remained many years, gradually acquiring the advantages of civilized life; and here one would have imagined the American Government (with unpeopled wilds, extending for thousands of miles) might have left them in peace. But no: about thirty years ago, the Government, with the most barefaced disregard of all the oaths of repeated treaties, totally regardless of, or despising all the ties of honour or humanity, forced them to leave the small remains of their ancient possessions, and to emigrate across the Mississippi to the state of Arkansas, amongst a people that knew them not. Here, being prevented from hunting by hostile and stronger tribes, they were obliged to avail themselves of the knowledge they had acquired before their emigration, and to cultivate crops and rear cattle.

The conduct of the Americans has not been a whit more humane towards the Indians, than that of the Spaniards in Mexico and the West Indian Islands. The latter hunted the natives down with dogs, and treated them with the greatest barbarity, but still did not force them to leave the land of their birth *en masse*. The Americans, by the no less certain means of treaties and proclamations, have driven the Indians back, inch by inch, till they have deprived them of all their country, and then, with a true feeling of fraternity and equality, and, as their papers say, with an "enlightenment worthy the age we live in," have

taken them kindly by the hand, and handed them over to a hostile country. According to the recent calculation, civilization advances at the rate of fifteen miles a-year; that was before the discovery of California. It has increased considerably during the last few years, both from the west, as well as from the east; so that the next fifty years will leave very little country for its original proprietors. The Indians themselves say, that so many white men have gone west, that they are sure the east must be unpeopled, and that therefore they shall emigrate in that direction. The treatment of the Indians by the American Government is much the same as that of a first lieutenant telling a miserable little midshipman, "If things go on in this manner, sir, either you or I must leave the ship." If either is forced to leave, it is pretty evident which one it would be.

CHAPTER VIII.

PRAIRIE—SOURCE OF ST. PETER'S RIVER—BEAR'S LODGE TO FORT SNELLING.

On the 11th of November we camped on the open prairie, under the lee of a small knoll, known by the name of the "Bear's Lodge." It was a few years ago the residence of a grizzly bear, who was the dread of the surrounding Indians and buffalo. One of the half-breeds, who had been hunting on the Red River, told us some rather interesting stories of the ferocity of the grizzly bear. Last year he was out after wolves, when he suddenly came upon a grizzly bear. He was well mounted, and being anxious to distinguish himself, he determined to try and kill her; he therefore galloped up to her and fired at her in passing (the way they always attack large game). When he had fired, he checked his horse a little, whilst loading, intending then to turn and give her another shot. Whilst in the act of loading he heard a noise behind him, and turning found the bear almost at his horse's quarters. He had just time to turn and fire as the bear sprang upon his horse; luckily the shot took effect and the bear fell dead, but not before she had killed the horse. The grizzly bear cannot climb trees, but can gallop very nearly as fast as a horse; quite as fast, indeed, for a short distance. A curious

pair of skeletons were found in the prairie some years since, that of a buffalo bull and a grizzly bear; they were lying close together, the bull's horns firmly fixed in the breast-bone of the bear:—the fight must have been worth seeing.

We were roused every night by flights of swans and geese and cranes wending their way south. The latter do not seem to have changed their habits much since the days of Homer, and trumpet and cackle incessantly; when flying low, the flapping of thousands of wings in the air has a curious effect. Their migrations are longer than are generally supposed, reaching from the extreme north to Mexico and Central America.

We camped on the Shian River, which is full of beaver and otter, but owing to its being the frontier between the Sioux and the Chips, neither have the pluck to hunt it. We intended to have remained there a week or two to hunt elk and beaver, but our guides were afraid of the pillager bands of Chips making a "raise" of their scalps and our horses. One of my companions and old Rainville went after buffalo, and fell in with some Siouxs on the march. The Sioux, at first, when at a distance, thought they were Mandans and cached. N—— said it was like magic the way they concealed themselves in the open prairie. They possess in common with hares and deer the faculty of taking advantage of every small rise and undulation, which a white man's eye hardly detects. The Mandans are a race of Indians, perfectly distinct in complexion and habits from the other tribes of North America. They are very nearly as white as Europeans, and

have hair on their faces; they do not live in buffalo-skin lodges, but build regular huts of mud and wood. They are said to be the descendants of Madoc, a Welsh Prince, who settled in Texas early in the twelfth century, but were driven by the Comanche and other southern tribes up to the north. They are more ingenious than the other tribes, and the traders say they make a kind of blanket, which in a very small degree resembles the Welsh blanket. They were very nearly destroyed by the small-pox some fifteen years ago, but have now to some extent recovered their former numbers.

I have often heard the remark, that it is a great pity some man of science and perseverance does not devote some years to acquiring the different Indian languages, and trying to form some general hypothesis of their origin, from the different customs and traditions extant amongst them. This is very true, and is a consummation devoutly to be wished; but the extraordinary number and complexity of the languages of the Aborigines of America, north and south, completely put it out of the power of one, or even of a dozen philologists, to perform properly. There are as many languages spoken amongst the two or three millions of American savages scattered over the two continents of America, as amongst the six hundred millions of human beings composing the population of the rest of the globe. There are no less than 211 languages spoken in the northern continent and Mexico: 44 in central, and 168 in the southern continent of America. There are thus, according to Vatel, nearly 500 distinct dialects spoken in the New World, without enumerating any which do not

differ from each other as widely as the Spanish from the Italian, or the German from the Dutch. After a laborious comparison of the 500 known languages of America with those of the Old World, only some hundred or so words have been found having any distinct or rather indistinct resemblance. Those few words have been selected from nealy 100 American languages, and are said to bear a kind of resemblance to words at present used in the Mongol, Tonguse, and other northern Asiatic nations; some few also bear a slight resemblance to words in the Celtic and Biscayan languages. These trifling and most probably fortuitous resemblances, although affording a slight foundation on which any number of theoretical superstructures may be raised, are quite insufficient to be of any use in solving the problem, as to how the American continent was peopled. The more an unprejudiced person examines the numerous theories on the subject, the more completely must he be convinced that the data and facts upon which the different theories are founded are insufficient for conclusive argument.

Although it is evident from the hull of the ship that Columbus discovered during his second voyage, that the physical conditions of the oceanic currents render it possible that vessels or canoes may have been washed from the coast of Africa to that of America, yet, beyond the undoubted fact that the inhabitants of Paraguay, the point where any vessel or canoe would probably strike, are considerably darker in complexion than the other inhabitants of America — and even amongst them there is no similarity whatever to the negro features—there is very little

reason to suppose that Africa contributed in any considerable degree to the peopling of the new world. America must either have been peopled from Asia or from Europe, and the probability is strongly in favour of its being peopled from both.

The north of Greenland is only separated from the continent of America by a narrow strait, and the inhabitants every now and then have intercourse; and it is an ascertained fact that the Esquimaux perfectly resemble the Greenlanders in aspect and appearance, dress, and mode of living. The presumption is strong, therefore, that the Esquimaux originally came from Greenland; they are, however, the only people of North America who bear any resemblance to the Northern Europeans, and are evidently a distinct race from all the other nations of the American continent.

The other nations of Indians, from the extreme north of the continent to the extreme south, bear undeniable evidence of a common origin, modified of course by climate and their mode of life; and moreover, in every peculiarity of feature, person, and disposition which characterises them, they display a striking affinity to the rude tribes scattered over the north of Asia: the presumption therefore is equally strong that they also were originally of the same race, and came from Asia: this is quite feasible when we come to consider that the north-east of Asia is only separated from the north-west of America by Behring's Straits. Nearly all the tribes of North American Indians have certain indistinct traditions of their ancestors possessing a warmer country in the south. The now extinct tribe of Indians, the

Natchez of Florida that I before mentioned, form a remarkable and interesting exception. They had a monarchical form of government, and a class of nobles like the Mexicans, and preserved a curious tradition that their forefathers came from the Rising Sun, across the Big Salt Lake; that the voyage was long, and their ancestors were on the point of perishing with hunger when they reached America. They were a fierce tribe, and not improbably belonged to the race of the Caribs of the Islands, having been driven out of their reckoning by storms or currents.

Tamerlane, the Mongolian conqueror, who lived some time in the beginning of the fifteenth century, adopted the impression of a bloody hand for his mark on all state occasions. Now it is a curious fact, that the North American Indians are found using this device at this very day in ornamenting their war-robes and lodges; and in central America, Stephens found on nearly all the ruins he visited the impression of a red hand, evidently made with the hand itself on the plaster when soft; so frequent were they, that though at first they struck him as curious and mysterious, yet they soon became so common as to attract no attention. Whether the meaning of the impression under such different circumstances, and in so distant an age and place, could be traced up to some common source or tradition, I leave it for wiser heads to decide; certainly, as Buckstone would say, "the incident is rather a strong one." The Indians probably know nothing of the tradition of the device, but use it as an ornament which has been handed down to them from father to son, without any distinct meaning.

It is singular that traditions regarding the arrival of a white and bearded man from an unknown country, and his teaching the natives to build houses and cultivate ground, are preserved in four distinct portions of America. The white man from whom the Peruvians professed to have derived their entire code of law—the Quetzalcoatl of the Mexicans—the Bochica of the Muyscas in New Grenada—the Camam of the Brazilians, are all instances of the kind. But what is most singular is, that the Peruvian legislator was the only one whose advent was said to have been from the West, the other three came from the East. How, it is difficult to conceive.

We "humped" it for four days, snowing and sleeting continually, with the snow several inches deep, and a wind that went through you and came out the other side without stopping. You felt the breath out of your body was quite as cold as the air you took in. We had no fire but from buffalo-dung, which took a long time to collect, and then lasted but a very short time, giving scarcely any heat. Lying down in snow, with nothing to eat, and awakening next morning half frozen and the snow nearly a foot deep over you, was by no means cheerful. A buffalo robe is the warmest thing possible so long as you can exclude the air; but during those cold drifting winds on the prairies, if a crevice of half an inch got open you were half frozen; the wind came direct from the Pole, with hardly a stick or a hill to break its keenness. All our flour, pork, tea, and coffee had been exhausted for nearly a fortnight, and we had nothing but meat, meat, meat, harder and harder, half-cooked, and more indigestible every

day, washed down with either snow-water, which is very unwholesome, or by stagnant pool-water, got with much difficulty by chopping a hole in the ice. One day, when the repetition of buffalo-meat had become extremely nauseous, we boiled a few tit-bits of some of the large wolves we had killed, and ate them *par préférence,* but I cannot say it was an improvement. A wolf's heart eaten warm was supposed by the ancients to be a cure for madness and hypochondria; however, as we were perfectly *sane,* and by no means *melancholy,* we had no necessity to try the remedy, and contented ourselves with the ribs and loins.

Nov. 17.—One day we shot an old bull; he was standing in a hollow with several wolves prowling round him: as he did not start off at our approach we expected him to charge us and show fight, and approached with great caution; but when we got close up to him we found that he was quite blind from great age. We held a sort of saddle-bow court-martial on him, and settled that it was more humane to give him an ounce of lead, and put him out of misery, than leave him helpless to the tender mercies of the wolves, who would have attacked him the moment he lay down; consequently we gave him a volley. He never moved an inch afterwards. We intended taking his tongue, but he was so old and so tough, we found it was no use!

Whilst suffering from excessive cold, and badness and scarceness of food, it appeared as if the ghosts of all the correct little dinners we had ever eaten, every basin of *potage à la bisque* at the Trois Frères, every glass of Cunningham's claret, and every white-

chokered, white-napkined waiter one had ever known, rose up to mock us in our misery. But who

> "Can cloy the hungry edge of appetite
> By bare imagination of a feast?
> * * * * * *
> Oh no! the apprehension of the good
> Gives but the greater feeling to the worse."

I think it is Rousseau who says, if a man wants to imagine beautiful scenery he should be shut up between four walls; and certainly if a man wants to imagine a warm room and comfortable dinner, squatting in the snow on the prairie, with a piercing wind, a nearly extinguished fire, and a platter of half-boiled wolf or *unmasticable* bull, washed down with water by no means so superexcellent as that of the Choaspis in Persia, which the Persian kings preferred to wine, or as that of the Clitorius, "with which," as Ovid says, "whoever has allayed his thirst, avoids wine, and abstemious delights in pure water only," is the place to realize this vision with effect!

I know no situation where selfishness is more drawn out, or acts with less disguise than on an expedition of this kind. None of our party were men of bad tempers or remarkably selfish dispositions; but I believe when wrapped up for the night in our buffalo robes, it must have been a matter of very great importance which would have induced us to turn out. This laziness, or selfishness, or whatever it was, showed itself most strongly in trifles. When taking our tea (when we had any) for instance, if either of us asked the other for more sugar, and the party asked had to move his blanket even six inches from his shoulder, the request was sure to be met with some cutting

remark, such as, "What a fellow you are for sugar!" —"You're always asking for more sugar!"—"Why didn't you take more at first?" &c. It is the same feeling of irritability which gave rise to the story of the man who, being in a very bad humour, and seeing another, a perfect stranger, stoop down to tie his shoe, gave him a tremendous kick, saying, "Hang you, sir!—you're always tying your shoe!"

On the 20th November, late in the evening, we arrived at a lake, called by the half-breeds, "Lac de Bête puant," or the "Lake of the stinking Skunk." It swarmed with geese and ducks, and we sent out the young Indians to get some. They soon returned with fifteen ducks and two geese, which were speedily placed in the pot, and *all* devoured by seven hungry men. We were very nearly paying dear for our gourmandizing feast. We had camped about a quarter of a mile from the lake, and having plenty of wood, had made a roaring fire, and after the cold wind of the last ten days, and the fat ducks of the last two hours, we were all in a very sleepy and far from watchful state. The consequence was, we all fell into a deep sleep, from which we did not awake till after sunrise, when we discovered what a narrow escape we had had. The prairie had been on fire, and had run up within a quarter of a mile of our encampment, when fortunately the wind had changed, and when we awoke we could see the fire miles and miles away. If the wind had not changed it must have gone hard with us. We had encamped in very high grass, and if the fire had once caught us asleep, we should never have had time to get to the lake.

The next night the wind again changed, and the

fire having almost described a circle round us, came back in quite an opposite direction; we watched it gradually eating its way up to us all day. About 4 P. M. we camped in a small piece of wood, very near the source of the St. Peter River, and about a quarter of a mile from the side of the Couteau des Prairies. The fire kept advancing all night, but the wind was so unsteady, it could make but little progress. The fire was crackling all round us, sometimes half-a-mile off, and sometimes hardly three hundred yards: although the night was pitch dark, we could see to read the smallest writing by the light of the fire. It was a most magnificent sight, the fire creeping up the sides of the Couteau, like a great writhing serpent, darting out innumerable forked tongues, sometimes almost dying away for want of wind, or from getting amongst the snow-drifts, and then again blazing up twenty or thirty feet high, and rushing along with a crackle like ten thousand men firing a *feu de joie*. We sat up a good part of the night watching the fire, and our cattle, who were terribly frightened; we knew that *we* were perfectly safe, (as the fire never enters timber, a fact I should have doubted had I not seen it frequently,) but if the cattle had once been seized with a panic, we should have lost every one of them, as when stampedoed by fire, they are just as likely to rush into it as away from it. A fire in the prairie advances in two sides of a square, exactly in the same way as mowers advance. It is arrested quite suddenly by rain or by a change of wind, as if the mowers had left off to go to their dinners. It crackles (as I before observed) like a platoon of musketry, and with a strong wind, roars and rushes along at the

rate of fifteen or sixteen miles an hour. When the grass is long, and the wind high, the fire advances *against* the wind; this apparent anomaly is easily explained:—the high wind blows the tops of the high grass over the fire, which ignite first, and communicating with the stem, the fire eats its way to windward. The Indians take the greatest pains to avoid firing the grass in their own country, as it frightens away the buffalo; but so thoughtless are they, that they will sometimes make an incursion into an enemy's country on purpose to fire it, quite forgetting that the fire once started, nobody can tell what direction it will take, and that they themselves are just as likely to be the sufferers as those they go to injure. This autumn the fires have covered a greater area than has ever been known; the banks of the Missouri are said to be burnt for the distance of five hundred miles. The Indians, therefore, frequenting those prairies, must either starve, or hunt in their enemies' country. The Sioux say that the Blackfeet and Mandans have fired their prairie this year.

There are two methods of avoiding fires in the prairie; one, by lighting a fire yourself, and keeping on the burnt grass in its track; and the other, by reaching water or timber: we had to avail ourselves of both these methods. People taking refuge in some of the lakes covered with reeds, frequently find themselves worse off than if they had remained on hard ground; for though they may be up to the middle in water, the fire still consumes the high reeds, often six or seven feet high, to a level with the water, and unless they can exist under water, they come to grief. Cattle and buffalo, whose instinct

prompts them to rush to the nearest water, frequently get caught in this manner, and perish in numbers.

We reached Lake Travers late in the evening of November 24th, after the coldest ride I ever remember, and having had to cross three frozen rivers. There is one of the finest views I ever saw from the High Bluff, between Lake Travers and Big-stone Lake. You have the range of the Couteau behind you, the boundless Prairie in front, and the two Lakes on either hand. Lake Travers is about thirty miles, and Big-stone Lake forty miles long. The latter derives its name from some enormous granite boulders scattered about it, dropped most likely from some icebergs drifting over this part of the world in former ages, when the prairie was the bed of an ocean. Here we found some Sioux lodges: almost all the men were out for their autumn hunt, and only two or three old men left to supply the women and children with fish and the means of subsistence. Our guides were made so much at home by the squaws, and found themselves so comfortable, that they refused to move, declaring the horses and mules wanted rest, that the prairie was burnt the whole distance to Lac-qui-Parle, &c. However, we who saw the real reasons for their wishing to remain, determined to set out without them, and taking the young Indian as a guide, to make the best of our way to Lac-qui-Parle, about 140 miles. We made the young Indian some presents, and explained to him that we wanted to go to the Englishman's lodge, meaning McLeod, (who was the only Englishman he had any knowledge of,) and

about three o'clock A.M. we set off, each taking a buffalo-robe and a spare pair of mocassins, and a piece of buffalo-meat. The snow was deep, and the weather bitterly cold. The "trail" lay along the side of Big-stone Lake, and was very picturesque; we racked along about six miles an hour till long after dark, when we camped in a sort of thicket, built a fire, and roasted, or rather burnt our meat on sticks. We tethered our horses all together, and lay down, as we intended to start again when the moon was well up.

The Indian awoke us about midnight. Snowing hard, the wind blowing the snow right into our faces. We made tracks as long as the moon lasted, and lay down till daylight, to enable our horses to get a last pick before entering a burnt prairie of about sixty miles. The wind was too cold to allow us to sleep, and we welcomed the first gleam of light with pleasure. We rode the whole day through a burnt prairie, and arrived at Lac-qui-Parle at night. Nothing can well be imagined more tiresome or desolate than a journey across a burnt prairie: when there is snow on the ground you can see the white trail on the black ground meandering like a white worm for miles. The jet black ground causes a very unpleasant sensation in the eye. It was curious to see the ease with which the young Indian kept following the "trail," at the rate of seven miles an hour, without for one second being confused by the innumerable buffalo paths which crossed our course at every ten yards, and, to our inexperienced eyes, appeared exactly similar. By the the time we reached Lac-qui-Parle, we had had pretty nearly *quantum suff.*, and for the last twenty miles our efforts to urge along our poor

jaded cattle had added considerably to our fatigue and annoyance. We went to the trader's hut, and in a most unrelenting way "pitched into" the tea, sugar, pork and potatoes, and we never could sufficiently gloat over the large fire, and sat and smoked, and smoked and sat and roasted ourselves in a perfect state of enjoyment. The winding up of the evening, the wrapping ourselves up in our robes, and lying down before the fire, and hearing the wind and snow beating outside, and knowing there were no horses to tether, and no occasion to rouse out till morning, was worthy of the "seventh heaven." I now quite realized the Indian's reason for fancying the place for wicked spirits to be a region of perpetual cold and want, and their heaven to be a place of warmth and plenty.

We spent three or four days at Lac-qui-Parle before we thought of moving, and had one grand tea-party at the missionary's, a gentlemanly clever man, with an equally agreeable wife, and a family that reminded me of the Swiss family Robinson. He had resided there thirteen years, and I imagine that his success was by no means equal to his exertions and privations. He has translated one of the Gospels into the Sioux language, but more from a sense of duty (and hope for the future) than any idea of its at present benefiting the Indians. He does not give the Sioux a very high place in the intellectual classification of the world, and seems to imagine there is no chance whatever of their becoming civilized.

The Indians believe that the thunder is a huge bird, with green back and grey breast, and that the

flapping of his wings causes the thunder (some faint resemblance to the mythological birds of Jove, who carried the thunder in their claws). They imagine that the heavens are supported by four large poles, resembling large trees; that the big bird lives in the west, and is only heard when flying east. This is easily accounted for by the fact of their storms almost invariably coming from the west. They have a superstitious fear of the aurora borealis, which they call the "medicine fire." They believe that it has the power of rendering them good shots, (an idea arising, I imagine, from the manner in which the rays of light of an aurora dart about in the heavens,) and consequently worship it. Of meteors and falling stars they have a great dread; they believe that they are sent by the great warriors who are in the "happy hunting-grounds," to warn them of danger. The meteor that falls in the west is the only one that portends success to the Sioux in war; those that fall in the north, south, or east portend that a blow will be struck in either quarter by their enemies. Four is their sacred number; they dance four times before going to war, they dance for four months round their scalps, and all their religious ceremonies are performed four times. Their singing is the most monotonous tiresome chaunt imaginable, a variation on two low notes and a high one. When camping out, if there were many of them, they would keep up the chaunt all night, relieving each other by turns, and if any awoke in the night, they deemed it their duty immediately to begin singing. In the spring they suffer very much from snow-blindness, (arising from the glare of the sun on the snow;) so much,

indeed, that they have a month which they call the Month of Bad Eyes. It is no uncommon sight in the spring to see one Indian nearly blind leading half-a-dozen others quite blind; luckily there are no ditches for them to fall into.

The cant about the trammels of civilization, and the perfect liberty and independence of the savage in his native state, roaming where he listeth, is all humbug; nobody, in reality, has less liberty than the savage Indian. He cannot say, This country and manner of life does not suit me; I will go and live elsewhere. The instant he sets his foot out of his own country he knows he will be scalped. His position realizes to the letter—"In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread." His every moment is taken up by his exertions to procure food. The laws even of the society he exists in render him anything but a free agent. Witness the young warrior whose lodge was slit up on a cold winter's night, and his gun broken, because he had hunted without leave—(game laws, with a vengeance.) The more civilized and enlightened a country becomes, the greater liberty of thought and action its inhabitants enjoy. The honest labourer or sweeper of crossings in London has more real freedom than the proudest chief that ever hunted buffalo on the prairie.

At the end of the third day our rascally guides made their appearance, and we paid them their score, giving them a little of our minds. A more lazy, lying, and cowardly set of men I hope never to meet again. Our horses were all far too weak to afford any hope of their being of any use to us on our return to St. Peter's, so we made a fresh bargain with the

trader's head-man, a Scotch Canadian, expatriated for shooting a man in a duel.

We set off *en route* to La Framboise trading fort, 120 miles distant, where we arrived in four days, the snow being nearly two feet deep the whole way. During the autumn, on the prairie you find large flocks of black birds, much resembling starlings in shape and flight; they are very tame, and I have several times seen them sitting on the horses' backs. The Indians say they are the first to come in the spring and the last to disappear in autumn. How that is, I can't say, but during the last six weeks on the prairies we did not see one, but their place was supplied by flocks of stone-coloured birds, with white wings and breasts, rather smaller than the black bird. They are equally tame, taking short flights, and by some peculiarity of movement, when flying, you see only the white breast and inside of the wings, which has exactly the appearance of flakes of snow, or of pieces of white paper falling; hence the Indians call them the Snow-bird. They appear and disappear equally as suddenly as the black bird.

We were hospitably entertained by "La Framboise," the jovial old Canadian half-breed before mentioned. We had got into the region of venison, the only eatable fresh meat we had tasted since the feast of ducks. La Framboise told us that on the Rivière des Moines, and on the little Sioux River, about fifty miles west of us, the Indians had just had a "difficulty" with some Yankee traders, and had "raised" their hair and taken their horses. Next day we made "tracks" for Travers de Sioux, where we arrived on the evening of the second day. Snow very deep, and travel-

ling very fatiguing. We found the half-breed Graham in great distress, having lost his little son the day before. In the evening some squaws came to cry and condole with the mother. It was a species of "wake;" and at first I rather respected their motives, but Graham told me it was only a begging manœuvre to get a supper.

On December 2d, after a good breakfast of bacon and wild honey, we got our horses over the St. Peter's with great difficulty; owing to the rapidity of the current and the springs, it had not frozen right over, so we had to create a passage across, and fixing the animals one by one on the leeward side of a canoe, or dug-out, to protect them from the floating blocks of ice, we paddled them across; some of the poor brutes were nearly dead with cold when we landed them. When they were all over, we set out for St. Peter's. The snow was far too deep to allow of our riding the horses, they having hard work to get themselves along; so we had the pleasant prospect of walking upwards of 100 miles through snow over our ankles, and no snow-shoes on. We camped the first night in the Big-wood, and made a roasting fire of a silk-cotton tree, about thirty feet long, and ten or twelve feet high, and lying down at full length before it, we defied the snow, which fell in quantities. The second night we slept at a trader's hut, where we had breakfasted in going out, but he himself, poor fellow, was dead of quinsey, and his wife nearly so. On the 7th December, the third day from our leaving Travers de Sioux, after a tedious journey on foot, the snow very deep, and the wind as cold as charity, we arrived at St. Peter's before dark, and

found the thermometer fourteen below zero; and before we left to go south it was as low as twenty. The next day we went over to Fort Snelling, and were invited by the officers to a dance, given in turn by the members of their small society, consisting entirely of the garrison. We explained that we had no ball-dress, but that difficulty being overruled, we accepted the invitation with pleasure. Our "get up" for the ball was of a most curious nature; being short of money till we got to St. Louis, all our investments in dress had been entirely guided by a view to the utility of the article. We had each purchased a great blanket-coat, which reached down to the heels; these with black trowsers, hair down to our shoulders, and mocassins, completed our ball attire. When we entered the ball-room, one gentleman not acquainted with the forlorn condition of our wardrobe, came to us and asked us if we would not rather leave our great-coats in an ante-room! The great-coats being the only upper vestments we had on, we were obliged to explain the necessity of our declining to avail ourselves of his kind offer. The next day we found the Mississippi, though once completely frozen over by a frost of twelve below zero, had broken up again, and being unable to cross over to St. Paul's to "raise the ready," the officers in the garrison kindly pressed us to become their guests, which we did with great pleasure. They rigged us up cots and sleeping places, and we remained with them for about ten days. More agreeable, gentlemanly, and well-informed men I never wish to meet, and I doubt whether any service can produce their superiors. They had been in the Mexican war, and we used to

have long arguments about it, and they agreed in saying that the difficulties to be encountered in Mexico were more those of privation and climate than of hard fighting.

The American army pin their faith on General Scott. They say that his manœuvres and tactics during his march to the city of Mexico, and his battles *en route*, were very correct indeed, and showed great generalship. Of General Taylor, and the battle of Buena-Vista, they think nothing at all. The volunteers, on the other hand, pretend to think General Scott over-rated, and swear by General Taylor. The reason for this difference of feeling is easily understood. General Scott is a regular soldier, heart and soul, and took every opportunity of showing the free and enlightened citizens that flocked to the war as volunteers, that though he had a great respect for them as American citizens, as American soldiers he thought they were a failure. Taylor, on the other hand, gave out that the volunteers were superior to the regulars on every occasion. The consequence was, Taylor was elected President, and the first use he made of his appointment was to remove General Scott from the command of the army, or, what amounted to the same thing, to defer confirming him in the appointment. People who imagine that the Americans are not a nation anxious for military glory, and endued with a military spirit, (at all events, as far as titles and uniforms are concerned,) are very much mistaken: they worship in the blindest manner those whom they are pleased to consider their heroes. General Jackson, the most obstinate, self-willed old individual, with as much

idea and respect for liberty as the Emperor of China, was elected President twice, merely because he repulsed the British at New Orleans—an action which anywhere else would have been counted as an every-day skirmish. General Taylor, merely because he won the battle of Buena-Vista, and flattered the military taste and extolled the deeds of the majority, and for no other reason whatever, was elected President, in opposition to Webster and Clay. General Scott is now one of the candidates, not from his political principles, but from his military renown. If ever any fundamental change takes place in the American constitution, it will be brought about by a man who can dazzle them with military glory, rather than convince them by political reasoning.

At Fort Snelling we heard a great deal about a Captain Michael Scott, a worthy namesake of the great Michael, if all is true that is related of him. "Coon" Scott, as he was called, was a notorious character in the American army, and supposed to be the best shot that ever existed. He derived his cognomen "Coon" from a story they told of him. He was out shooting one day, when he saw a racoon sitting in a tree. He levelled his rifle at it, and was just going to fire, when the "coon" called out, and said: "Are you Captain Scott?" "Yes." "What, Captain Michael Scott of such and such a regiment?" "Yes." "Oh! then you need not give yourself the trouble to fire; I'll come down;" and down he came accordingly. The real fact was, that Scott's companions had been firing at a racoon, which being protected by the limb of a tree from their fire, they could see, but not touch, and consequently it remained unmoved. This Scott saw, and went round

to the other side. Directly the racoon found that his body was unprotected, and exposed to the shot, he came down—and hence the story. Scott was said to be able to put a rifle bullet through two potatoes, thrown up in the air; his brother officers agreed in saying there was no doubt the potatoes were thrown up, and that when they came down there was a hole in each—the only difficulty was the nature of the hole. It appeared that when anybody else fired at a potato and struck it, the bullet split it all to pieces; whereas, when Scott fired, his bullet made the neatest, smoothest hole possible. This induced his enemies to surmise that the holes were made in the potatoes before they went up. (The most reasonable supposition.) His death was rather singular: he was always shooting with a rifle or smooth-bore, and he had a conviction which he never concealed from anybody, (which was strengthened by his having escaped in duels untouched from the best shots,) that he never could be wounded by a bullet. During the advance on the city of Mexico he commanded a company at the battle of Chapultepec. His men were ordered to lie down, to allow the enemies' shot to pass over them; he alone remained standing; his brother officers remonstrated with him on the folly of exposing himself unnecessarily, but he laughed, and said, "The bullet is not yet run that will kill Michael Scott." The words were hardly out of his mouth, when a ball struck him in the heart, and he never moved again.

St. Peter's is a great trading fort on the right bank of the Mississippi, opposite St. Paul's, and is inhabited entirely by half-breeds. They are invariably white on the father's, and red on the mther's

side, and not a single instance of the contrary is on record. The English, Scotch, or American half-breeds are generally speaking intelligent, honest, determined fellows. The French half-breeds are for the most part lazy, exacting and cowardly, though at St. Peter's I saw some remarkable exceptions.

At Fort Snelling we made the acquaintance of the Indian agent, whom the Indians call the "Little Potato." His predecessor was a Colonel Murphy, and was a very large man. The Indians inquired the meaning of the word Murphy, and were told it meant "potato" (which they in their simplicity believed was the name applied to all agents); accordingly, from his size, they called him the Big Potato, and his successor, the one I met, (being a much smaller one,) they christened "the Little Potato."

We had long discussions with the soldiers, about the comparative merits of revolvers and double-barrelled pistols. All the dragoons, when first sent to Mexico, were armed with revolvers, or rather Colt's repeaters, viz. with one barrel and six chambers; but it was found that, from any inaccuracy or carelessness in the hurry of loading, the chambers were very apt to explode together. Whether this is an imperfection that can be remedied or not, I cannot say; but repeaters are not served out to the army at present. The Texan Rangers, who, during the Mexican war, in the name of liberty, and for the honour of their country, committed more atrocities than were ever heard of in civilized warfare before, were all armed with a Colt's repeating-rifle and a brace of pistols. So they went into action with eighteen shots ready! and, as most of them were supplied with spare chambers, their eighteen shots

could very quickly be replaced by other eighteen! —rather serious odds for an equal number of men with single-barrel muskets to contend against.

One of the soldiers had served many years on the extreme western frontier, and gave us some amusing accounts of the extraordinary state of lawlessness existing in those parts. He said, that one day, riding along a road in Arkansas, he saw a man seated by the side of it, his face covered with his hands, which were dripping with blood. As he was groaning, and appeared suffering, he went up to him, and inquired what was the matter with him. He said he had had a "difficulty" with another man, who had completely "gouged" out one eye, and very nearly destroyed the sight of the other. G—— of course was shocked, and asked the man whether he could assist him in any way in getting satisfaction. The man grinned, and said,—"I guess I have some satisfaction already, any how!"—and, putting his hands into his pocket, he pulled out something which A—— at first thought was a crushed gooseberry, but which on closer inspection he discovered to be the eye of the man's opponent, which he had extracted and preserved as a trophy!

There is a strong aristocratic feeling in the United States army, and a great jealousy exists between the civil and military authorities, which displays itself whenever they come in contact. The civilians perceive the aristocratic tendency of the army, and affect to consider that a large army is dangerous to the liberties of the sovereign people. The military, on the other hand, from the superiority of their education, and from their more enlightened views, arising from foreign travel, and from more time and leisure

devoted to the "*ingenuas artes*," have a great contempt for the vulgarity and would-be military swagger of most of the civilians, and the superiority they arrogate to themselves over the regulars, more especially with regard to the Mexican war, where in reality *all* the real fighting was done by the regular troops,—the volunteers doing little else than break into convents, and pillage churches. The regular army are also disgusted at the assumption of military titles, such as General, Colonel, Major, by every tailor or grocer that chooses to join a militia corps.

The military have hard work,—only 7,000 men to garrison all the forts in the Union, and to maintain the offensive on an Indian frontier of nearly 3,000 miles, scarcely appears sufficient, or at least is not a large force, especially since the discovery of Oregon and California, and the annexation of New Mexico and Texas. I met one officer of artillery, who had returned, on sick leave, from New Mexico, where he had been under canvass for eighteen months continuously.

From all accounts, I imagine there is a great deal of jobbing and favouritism in the United States army,—far more so than in the British. The privates are *all* foreigners,—Germans, English, Irish, and Scotch deserters, Poles, Hungarians, but not a single native-born American. I met numbers of United States officers in different parts of the Union, and I always found them the same—gentleman-like and agreeable, and more resembling Englishmen (though perhaps they will not consider that much praise) than any other class I met in America.

CHAPTER IX.

ST. PAUL'S—PRAIRIE DU CHIEN—ST. LOUIS.

When the ice was strong enough, we went over to St. Paul's to get money, and inquire as to the best means of getting to St. Louis. I was again very much struck with the position of St. Paul's; and if ever emigration tends towards the fertile valley of the St. Peter's and Blue Earth rivers, it will be the capital of the north-western states. Lake Superior is by this time connected with Lake Huron by a ship canal, and there is a plan before Congress for making a communication between the western extremity of Lake Superior and the Upper Mississippi. The plan is perfectly feasible, as Fox River, that runs into the Mississippi, and the St. Louis River, that runs into Lake Superior, are only separated from each other by a very short portage during the dry season, and in the wet season actually join. When that canal is made, there will be an uninterrupted communication by water between the Upper Mississippi and New York and the Atlantic, to the east; a clear run down to New Orleans and the West Indies, to the south; and already they talk of a railroad from

St. Paul's, across the Missouri and Rocky Mountains, to California and Oregon, to the west. Who can say, with these magnificent aërial prospects, that St. Paul's will not become a large and important place? If any one, however, *were* to say so there, the chances are, they would be provided with an aërial prospect of not quite so pleasant a nature.

The Chief Justice of Minnesota was holding his sessions at St. Paul's. The bar of the hotel was the court-house. The judge was sitting with his feet on the stove, on a level with his head, a cigar between his lips, a chew as big as an orange in his mouth, and a glass of some liquor by his side. The jury were in nearly the same elegant position, in different parts of the room; and a lawyer, sitting across a chair, leaning his chin on the back of it, was addressing them. The prisoner was sitting, drinking and smoking, with his back turned to the judge, and looked the most respectable and least concerned of the whole party. Altogether it struck me that there might be a great deal of justice, but very little dignity, in the application of the law in Minnesota. The fact of the judges being elected by a majority in the Houses of Assembly of the different states, and changed every year, is a circumstance that does not enhance the dignity of the judgeship, and must interfere with the independence of his position. Instead of its being, as with us, the reward of experience and approved integrity, it is very frequently turned into a political appointment, and the dignity of the position sacrificed to the interest of the individual. A man who only holds a position by the suffrage of a party runs a risk of being swayed in favour of the

majority that placed him there, and can remove him at pleasure. Moreover, the judge cannot enforce the proper respect due to him from the counsel, when they all know their places may be reversed the next day. The age at which a youth becomes independent is a very striking feature in the society of the Far West. A small boy keeps his father's store, or drives his father's waggon, at six years old; commences smoking and chewing at seven; repudiates his father, and starts on his own resources at ten; marries at sixteen, and, after becoming in turns judge, doctor, general, and being rich and ruined several times, generally finishes up as a bar-keeper, and dies, a "used-up," wizened, careworn old man, at forty.

One hears a great deal about the energy of the native American forcing his way into nature's wilds, undeterred by dangers or hardships. As far as I could judge from the portions of the western frontier that I saw, the native Americans are not at present the pioneers of civilization on the north-western frontier, whatever they may formerly have been. In nearly every instance that we came upon a log-hut far in advance of any settlement, we discovered that it belonged to some French Canadians. The French Canadians intermarry with the half-breeds and Indians very much; I imagine, from there being a similarity in the excessive indolence of their dispositions. At many of the western towns, Gallena, St. Paul's, and others, the native Americans form a small minority. English, Scotch, Canadians, Germans, Danes, and French composed nine-tenths of the population of St. Paul's. I consider St. Paul's the best point of departure for any one meditating

a prairie trip. The Indians and buffalo are much nearer than from St. Louis, and the expense incurred is much less. There are three trips that can be made from thence, according to the tastes of the traveller. If he wants to see the Indians in their native wilds, and study their habits and pursuits, and kill a moderate number of buffalo, the best route is the one we pursued, viz. by Lac-qui-Parle, to the banks of the Missouri. If, on the other hand, he does not care to see the Indians, and seeing and killing buffalo is his only object, (and this is generally the case,) the best route to pursue is to go from St. Paul's to the Selkirk settlement, on Red River, and join the half-breeds in their "Fall" hunt in September; here he will see nothing of the wild Indians, but any amount of buffalo. The third plan, and I think the most enjoyable, would be to start from St. Paul's, in June, with two or three half-breeds, six or seven horses, take a couple of skin lodges, (they are warmer than tents,) and two or three squaws to cook, and go and camp for two or three months on the Rivière des Moines, (Monks' River,) about a hundred and fifty miles south-west of St. Paul's; there game of all sorts abound. Elk, bear, wolves, and buffalo, are also generally found there.

The country about the Rivière des Moines formerly belonged to the Saxs and Foxes, but they were driven across the Missouri during Black-hawk's war, and only return every now and then on hunting expeditions, and to see if they can pick up a stray Sioux or two. The consequence is, that the Sioux are afraid of hunting there, except in large bodies, and the game being comparatively undisturbed has increased

to a wonderful extent. If ever I were to undertake a shooting expedition again, that is the route I should pursue. The Indians are very interesting, but dirty; and as for the sport of "running" buffalo, a three year old heifer, in a five-acre field, would afford quite as much sport to a man mounted on a 30*s.* Smithfield screw, as the biggest bull between the two oceans. But many will differ with me in this opinion; *chacun à son gout.*

Silk hats have so entirely replaced beaver that the beaver-skin is quite a drug in the market, and the traders don't care to take them; the consequence is, the beavers have an easy time of it, and are increasing in numbers rapidly. Some ten years since there was every chance of their becoming extinct. A beaver skin was then worth six or eight dollars. On Lake Superior I was offered some very fine ones at a dollar a-piece.

"The beaver sits upon the bank, watching the purling stream,
But that his skin will make a hat, the beaver does not dream."

His sagacity is wonderful, almost *reasonable.* When a party of beavers are cutting down a tree, (which, by the way, they can throw in any direction they choose,) one old beaver sits watching, and directly he sees the tree begining to give, he whistles shrill, and all the others run out of the way. I heard of a Canadian, on Lake Wisconsin, who bred beavers with great success; they are most amusing pets, and playful as a kitten. They once inhabited England and Wales, and their remains are continually discovered.

It seems a pity some one does not try them again

in some of the Scotch or Welsh rivers, where they could do no harm. They live entirely on branches and leaves, chiefly alder and willow.

At length, after nearly a fortnight of idleness, spent at Fort Snelling, the ice was declared passable, though not safe, but as we were anxious to get down south, we determined to "make tracks:" we hired a French Canadian, a good man, and a Sioux half-breed; they each engaged to supply us with a horse and sleigh, and to conduct us to Prairie du Chien, a distance of 400 miles, in a fortnight, on consideration of our giving them each 100 dollars, or 20*l*. The sum seemed large, but the distance was great, and the work hard, and they had to walk and run the whole way, and from the rotten state of the ice they ran a pretty good risk of losing their horses. They kept to their agreement very honourably and delivered us safe and sound at Prairie du Chien, on the evening of the fourteenth day. The ice was very uneven, sometimes for miles; it was like crossing a ridge and furrow of four or five feet high, sometimes higher. The first ice that forms on the Mississippi is always rough, in consequence of the floating masses being jammed up together by the current, and it is only after a few partial thaws, or that a regular track is cut, that the travelling becomes smooth, and then it is most agreeable. In many places the ice was so rotten that the water spouted up through the holes made by the corkings of the horses' shoes; and once one of the horses went bodily in, and was got out with great difficulty. It is impossible to get a horse out of the ice when struggling, and the only way is to

choke him till insensible, when he is more buoyant and hauled out with greater ease. In some places the ice bent almost like a sheet of paper, and cracked in the most unpleasant manner. Once in particular our position was anything but pleasant; it was at the junction of the Rivière des Moines, the water of which river had melted the ice on both shores of the Mississippi, leaving only a narrow bridge of ice in the centre of the river, about twenty yards broad, and a hundred yards long, and the ice hardly an inch and a half thick. The river at this point was about 1½ mile broad, and running between almost inaccessible cliffs of two or three hundred feet high, which rendered any idea of making a circuit by land impossible. When we came to this bridge of ice, therefore, we were in a considerable "fix." Going back was out of the question, as it was late in the afternoon, and we were within sight of the log-hut where we intended resting for the night, and our sleeping quarters of the night before were some forty miles in our rear, so, the only question was, whether to camp there, and wait till morning, or to risk it; we held a long council of war, but contrary to the usual habit in such cases, we in this instance, prompted as much by the pleasant prospect of a good shelter and warm fire for the night, on one side, as by the unpleasant certainty of a cold camp, with no shelter and no food on the other, determined to advance.

The Canadian, who was a spirited fellow, and knew the nature of ice thoroughly, advanced first with his axe to reconnoitre. We watched him advancing cautiously like a cat, the bridge bending with him at every step, and as I fully expected to see

it give way with his weight, we thought how little chance there was of our sleigh and horses getting over in safety. Before every step he took he tapped the ice with the axe, to see that it was sound, and every blow descending only with the weight of the axe itself penetrated right through, and the water came spouting up. When the guide had reached the other side he turned round and came back, saying that it was not safe, but still that we might try if we chose; in fact, unless we made up our minds to camp out in the cold, without food, we had no choice. Whilst standing shivering on the far side of the bridge, gazing with longing eyes at the warm-looking log-hut and the smoking chimney in the distance, I could not help thinking of the "Al-Sirat" in the Mahommedan creed, the bridge of breadth narrower than the web of a famished spider, and sharper than the edge of a sword, over which the faithful had to skate into Paradise, to which it was the only entrance. Any hesitation or want of courage during this, the last trial of their faith, and over they went, not into a frozen river, but into the "Inferno" itself. I doubt whether the most nervous, awkward, fat old Turk, who had never had a pair of skates on in his life—

> "With paradise within his view,
> And all its houris beck'ning through,"

ever wished himself safe over the difficulty with greater earnestness, or looked forward with more pleasure to a social evening in Paradise than I did to the haven before me, and the warm shelter therein. After hesitating a short time longer, and experiencing

much the same sensations that a person does when standing on the steps of a bathing machine on a very cold morning, we determined to make the attempt. The guide told us to cross one by one, keeping the exact centre of the bridge, and to walk as lightly and quickly as we could. As I was the lightest of the party the chances were best in my favour, but yet the feeling of the ice bending with your weight, and seeing the black stream, doubly dark contrasted with the clear white ice, and about fifty feet deep and some degrees below zero, gliding noiselessly along at the rate of three or four miles an hour within a few feet of you on either hand, and knowing that if any of the party fell in *nothing* could save them, as any attempt to help the one immersed by those on the edge of the ice would only have ensured a like death to the whole, and the chance of swimming a mile to the shore against a three-knot stream, and with the water so intensely cold, seemed equally hopeless, was anything but pleasant, and like the negro in the song, I felt inclined to "shut my eyes, to hold my breath." However, we all crossed in safety, and then our guides brought across the sleighs. They lengthened the rein as much as possible, to get as far as they could in advance of the horse, and then walked quickly forward. The horses were trembling in every limb, and seemed fully aware, poor brutes, of the danger they incurred; and had they been seized with a panic in crossing, and stopped, the ice would have given way; as it was, it bent in the most frightful manner, so much so that the water from the sides ran right over it, and but for its purity and surprising elasticity, and the weight

of the man, horse, and sleigh being separated as much as possible, it must have broken. The high heels of the horses' shoes did indeed go right through the ice. When we had got both sleighs and horses over, we paused to look back and consider; it appeared almost more dangerous when we had accomplished it than it did before. The bridge of ice was about 100 yards long and about twenty broad, and the ice was hardly an inch and a half thick; one single flaw or unsound piece and we should have lost our horses, sleighs, and perhaps ourselves. The Canadian guide said he had travelled on the Mississippi for twenty winters, but had never crossed such a bad place before. It could not well be worse. The whole thing reminded me of some very unsafe places we had crossed on the Mer-de-Glace during a trip I had made over the Col-de-Géant some three years previously. We were the first travellers that had ventured on the ice that year, the mail even considered it too unsafe.

We proceeded in safety to a wooding station for steamers, called War Eagle's Point.

The banks of the Mississippi, or as the Indians call it, the "Misippi," or "Father of Waters," are unhealthy throughout their whole course. The scenery is very superior to anything I expected, and was grand in the extreme, and far exceeded in beauty the Hudson; at least it would do in summer, but we saw it at a great disadvantage, the banks covered with snow, and the river with ice. Instead of the low, marshy banks, usually connected in my idea with the "Father of Waters," the banks from St. Paul's to the Prairie du Chien, between three and four hundred miles, are composed of a succession of high, rocky

bluffs, some three or four hundred feet high, well wooded on the sides. They are invariably in the same form, of a perfect truncated pyramid, and reminded me very much of some magnified representation of the ruins discovered by Stephens in Yucatan. The stream itself is deep, dark, and clear, varying from one to two miles in breadth, and winds majestically along at the foot of these bluffs, without any single impediment to change the even tenour of its way, from the Falls of St. Anthony to the Gulf of Mexico.

The first night from St. Paul's, we slept at a small Indian trader's hut, at a very pretty spot, called Medicine Wood; the second at Redwing, an encampment of demi-civilized Sioux. The quantity of rattlesnakes at this place and at several other districts on the banks of the Mississippi are almost fabulous. In winter they hybernate in holes under the rocks, and wreathe themselves together in knots, like worms at the bottom of a flower-pot. Our guide said that he once put a squib of gunpowder into one of these holes, and killed 150 snakes, that came out. Sindbad's account of the valley of snakes seemed almost realized. In Iowa, a few years back, a settler, with his wife and family, had at the beginning of winter occupied a deserted log-hut, and resided in it some weeks, when one evening finding the fire-place not so convenient, he moved the logs to another part of the room, and went to bed. In the night he was awoke by a scream from his wife, and on jumping up, found the floor literally swarming with rattlesnakes, writhing and darting about. His wife told him she was bit, and one of the children, and implored him to escape with the others, through the

roof. This he did, but his wife and child died. It appeared, that when he changed the fire, he placed it over a hole where these reptiles were hybernating, who being awakened by the heat, came swarming out in quite a cheerful manner, delighted to think that summer had arrived. The bite of a rattlesnake is not always, though generally fatal; it depends on whether the venom has entered any of the larger veins. The best antidote is intoxication, if it can be induced, but generally no amount of liquor will cause it. A missionary at Redwing told me that he was once called in to see an Indian who had been bitten by a rattlesnake. He found a ligature bound tight round the leg, above the wounded part; the leg was frightfully swollen. He gave the man two pints of the strongest alcohol, without producing any visible effect, and it was only by administering a third that he induced partial intoxication. It counteracted the effect of the poison, and the man recovered.

We lodged one night with another Missionary at some small station, and rolling ourselves up in our buffalo robes we slept on the floor, a proceeding which he said would have been most dangerous in the summer-time. Our guide told us he was once camping out with an old Indian; it was midday, and he was lying on the ground whilst the old chief was reclining with his back against a tree, when suddenly to his horror he saw a large rattlesnake wriggle itself deliberately across the old chief's naked body. The snake seemed to enjoy the warmth of it, remaining for some time on the Indian's stomach. The chief himself was watching it all the time, but dared not move an inch, knowing if he did so the snake

would strike him. At length without moving a muscle he made a peculiar hissing noise, and the snake, after lifting up his head and listening, glided away.

One day as we were sleighing along, two squaws hurried out from the bank, and made signs to us to stop; this we did, and they had an animated conversation with our guide, seemingly in a very uneasy state of mind. On inquiring the reason we found that there was a village of Indians close by, and that they had been drunk for two days, and at length they had fought, and one was killed. Feuds of this kind become hereditary. When one of the family is killed his relations consider themselves bound to revenge his death the first opportunity. At length on the 5th of January, after fourteen days' sleighing down the Mississippi, which was getting rather monotonous and tiring to us, and anything but agreeable to the horses, judging by their appearance, we reached Prairie du Chien, a miserable ruined settlement of some hundred years' standing, inhabited entirely by French Canadians. Here we parted with our guides; they were very drunk and very affectionate.

We were off at daybreak on the 8th of January in a sleigh (this time on land) for Lancaster, distant forty miles. The track lay through a pretty thickly populated country in the State of Iowa. At a small settlement, where we stopt to recruit nature, we saw a large bear hanging up in a tree, which had just been killed, and was to be cooked in the evening, when a great dance and gathering was expected for the occasion. Bears are very fat at this time of year,

and excellent eating. We sleighed on to Plattville, where we arrived in time for a murder. An Irishman, of course, had killed a Scotchman. We did not actually see the murder; but the body directly afterwards. It appeared that the Scotchman was an old Waterloo man, and the quarrel had arisen respecting the merits of *the Duke* in particular, and European politics in general. The cool, joking way in which the people in the bar-room, where the murder had just been committed, were talking over the matter was highly disgusting. The murderer not being arrested at once had been hustled away by his compatriots, who in this country stick to each other in crime just as staunchly as they do in the old country. The hotel-keeper told us a story which gives one some idea of the state of morals in this portion of the Union. He said that he met a friend of his one day walking with a loaded gun, and on asking him what he was going to do, "Oh!" he said, "I'm going to shoot Mr. C." (also a friend of the hotel-keeper's). "Well, but," said our friend, "have you told Mr. C. you are going to shoot him? because it is not gentlemanly to do it without giving him notice —it isn't really." "Well, certainly," said the other, hesitating, "I have *not* told him, but if you think it the *correct* thing, why I'll do so." "Oh! yes," said the innkeeper, "do so by all means. I assure you it would not be correct to take him unaware." Our friend chuckled when he told us, and said that by that means he had had time to put the threatened man on his guard, and he had no doubt saved his life.

The doctor who was called in after the murder was sitting in the bar-room. He had been a

colonel, then a doctor, and was now keeping a confectionary! We gave up sleighing here, and took places in the stage to Galena. The roads were like glass, and how the driver (who was considerably more than three parts drunk) managed to get along without accident, I don't know.

Galena is a horrible town, said to be one of the most unhealthy in the Union, and certainly if *names* have anything to do with it, it ought to be. It is situated on an isthmus between Smallpox and Fever Rivers! It is the very centre of the lead district, which is supposed to be, and is without doubt, the richest in the world. The lead is discovered quite close to the surface, and of a very great purity. All that has hitherto been procured has been by individual exertion, and no Company has as yet commenced any regular works; and till that is done, the lead will only be extricated in small quantities, and the richer veins, which lie deeper, will be untouched.

A very agreeable clever American, who travelled some 200 miles with us, said he had no moral doubt that if he could form a Company with 60,000*l.* he would repay the outlay in four years, and clear that sum annually, ever after, so long as the price of lead remained at what it was at that time.

I have no doubt, from all I have heard, that the copper region of Lake Superior, and the lead districts around Galena, are the two finest mineral districts in the world, and that when the eastern capitalists get more confidence in western investments, enormous fortunes will be made there. We remained at Galena two days waiting for a stage-coach to Peru and Springfield.

The Western States afford an instance of what a curse a free press may become when conducted by men of no talent, or, what is worse, by talents prostituted to a bad cause. Every little town throughout the Western States has its two or more papers; they are generally conducted by some briefless lawyer or hanger-on at the bar-rooms. As they have no public news whatever to communicate, they are obliged to occupy themselves with local gossip and abuse. The originals of the Eatanswill Gazette and the Eatanswill Independent certainly have their being in the Western States of America. Many of them treat of the most abstruse religious questions in matter-of-fact leading articles, and not a few preach total unbelief in the coolest manner imaginable. The information vouchsafed on European matters very often displays the grossest ignorance; and it is owing to their bitter articles against the old country (which they delight to describe as a bloodstained country, where an iron-heeled aristocracy is continually trampling up to their knees in the life-blood of a crushed peasantry!) that such a bad feeling continues to exist throughout the Western States against England. I could not forbear making one extract from a paper giving a retrospect of the Mexican war. There was a notice at the head of it saying that the articles had been published separately, and had gone through eleven editions.

Extract from the History of the Mexican War—11th edition. Talking of the taking of Mexico:—"The world beheld the sight and trembled; old Germany festering under her chains, looked up in awe at the strange spectacle, an every day people

becoming transformed into a great nation. France saw it too, and sighed as she turned her eye to the grave of Napoleon. But England, hypocritical and ferocious, at once the fox and the hyena, crouching on her trophies, the skulls of Irish starvation, and the corpses of Hindoo massacre; England, whom we hunted from our shores in the Revolution, and chased ignominiously from our seas in the second war; England, that Carthage of modern history, brutal in her revenge, and satanic in her lust for human flesh, beheld the American people in arms with trembling, and recognised their victorious search with niggardly pleasure."

One paper talked of the Duke of Wellington as that "'Gigantic Fog' of history,—the man who did not lose the Battle of Waterloo!" The editors, knowing the best way of pleasing the public is to flatter the national pride, do this to perfection, and as Sam Slick says, "they actually persuade them that having gone ahead of all creation, they are now actually going ahead of themselves."

We proceeded by stage from Galena to Peru, and thence to Peoria, on the Illinois River. The day we got there an attempt had been made by a drunken mob to lynch two prisoners under sentence of death. The mob broke into the prison and got the men out, but were so drunk they could not tie the knot properly! and the authorities were enabled to rescue them; they were, however, hung a few days afterwards. We arrived at Springfield on the 11th, the capital of the State of Illinois. The legislative assembly had just met, and great excitement was visible in the town. The Western States are ultra-

democratic in their politics. All the violent men and violent measures come from the west. The division of parties is just the reverse in America to what it is in England. In England the stronghold of democracy is in the large towns, and aristocracy has its strongest supporters in the country. In America the ultra-democrat and leveller is the western farmer, and the aristocratic tendency is most visible amongst the manufacturers and the merchants of the eastern cities. The Western States are destined to play an important part in the future of the Republic; already their influence is felt on all important occasions. Ultra-democratic principles, that in the Eastern States have given way to Whiggism, and in the south to Protection, in the west exist in the most violent form, and are gaining ground every day. Any idea of a separation of the Union, which in the north and south is openly canvassed at the public meetings, in the west is scouted; and I have heard the most sanguinary threats held out against any state or individual who should dare to propose such a thing. It is in the Western States also that that restless spirit and total want of local affection, which is so essentially a part of the American character, is most conspicuous. The continually changing their place of residence and mode of life has become by constant habit almost second nature, and it is as unusual in the west to see a man of forty who has *not* changed his residence and his profession a dozen times, as it is in England to see one who has. The change seems with them to be almost like a game of chance, which they seem to enjoy as much for its excitement as for its gain.

Springfield is not far from Norvoo, the ruins of the Mormon temple. This curious sect, after being chased from several parts of the Union, fixed their residence in Illinois, on the banks of the Mississippi; here, under the direction of their prophet, Joseph Smith, and other bright lights, they increased and multiplied to a great extent; but their Byronian style of morals, of "hating their neighbours, and loving their neighbour's wife," and some rather peculiar notions of the rights of "meum and tuum," caused them to be ejected, after a very severe contest, by the citizens of Illinois, aided by the United States troops, during which Mormon *war!* as it is called, many lives were lost, and Joe Smith lodged in the Springfield gaol, from which he was dragged by a drunken mob, and shot; he was a shrewd, clever man, and exercised most unlimited influence over his flock. Their present location on the borders of the Salt Lake in the Rocky Mountains is well situated as regards water and climate: it is said to be the finest wheat climate in the Union, but unfortunately there is no fuel; wood is very scarce, and they have even now to lead it several miles; and as the winters are very severe, unless they can manage to discover a coal-mine in the vicinity, they will, I expect, be forced to undertake another emigration towards Oregon.

If I was astonished at the violence of religious sects in the Eastern States, I was doubly struck with it in the West. Every sort of Baptist and Unitarian, Wet Baptists, and Dry Baptists, and Every-day Baptists, and Holy-day Baptists, &c., flourish in great numbers; perhaps it is almost natural to imagine,

that in a country where Mammon is worshipped by so large a majority and all religion almost openly scouted, there should be a minority which by its violence and activity compensates for its numerical insignificance. The extraordinary religious excitement displayed by the Shakers, Mormons, and other sects against each other, entirely gives the lie to those political economists who say, that the only way to prevent intolerance in religious matters, is to leave people entirely to themselves. The original framers of the United States' Constitution took great pains to separate Church and State most completely; and it is very fortunate they did so, for in a country where the whole government, you may say almost constitution, changes every four years, and where the majority is so despotic, any established religion, whatever it might be, connected with that government, would be sure to suffer from innovation.

One particular which strikes a foreigner all through the States, especially in the Western States, is the readiness with which everybody enters into discussions concerning religious subjects: you are startled at hearing the most ignorant giving most decided opinions concerning questions that even the cleverest and best men have avoided as not fit for public discussion. This habit leads them to get up texts of Scripture, not for their edification, but for the sake of argument; consequently scriptural phrases are continually used. I heard more blasphemy in one week in the bar-room at St. Louis, and I might almost say from one man, than I ever heard in my whole life. However, enough of this. We were not sorry to arrive at the banks of the Mississippi opposite

St. Louis, which we did just in time, as the next day the river was frozen over. Purgatory must be a joke to what we suffered during the last three hundred miles. The roads were exceedingly bad, ruts three or four feet deep, which nearly dislocated every bone in one's body. The stage was crowded to suffocation; three of *us*, and six great fat blowsy farmers, (who were smoking and spitting, and talking unintelligible nonsense which they thought was politics, continually for three days and nights,) were compressed into a space big enough for four moderate-sized men. At St. Louis we for the first time for five months discarded mocassins and other prairie garments, and arrayed ourselves in every-day apparel, and what to us appeared iron boots, the change being anything but agreeable. St. Louis is a town containing about 90,000 inhabitants of all races and colours, a very large preponderance of the former being Germans: it is situated on the west bank of the Mississippi, about sixteen miles below its junction with the Missouri; it is the capital of the State of Missouri, and is the most northern of the Slave States. It used to be the head-quarters of all the gamblers and duellists, and was some twenty years back about the most lawless town in the Union; now all the worst characters have either gone south to Texas or Arkansas, or west to California.

When the annexation of Texas was first mooted, all the biggest scoundrels flocked there: many who failed in trade, or committed forgery or murder, or found the civilized diggings too hot to hold them, wrote "G. T. T.," "Gone to Texas," on their doors, and started forthwith. These were the men that

formed the Texan Rangers, not a corps boasting of much moral feeling, if all accounts are true. St. Louis is famous for a duel that took place there some time ago. A regular fighting man and bully insulted a young man and challenged him to fight: the novice refused to fight, except in a perfectly dark room, which was agreed to. The two men were put into a dark room, armed with bowie knives and revolvers, and the seconds were not to open the door for half-an-hour. At the end of that time they did so, and found the young man sitting at one end of the room smoking his pipe, and the body of his antagonist lying on the middle of the floor, with the head completely severed from the body and placed on it, so as to face the door! The young man said they had followed each other about in the dark for some time without meeting, at length he drew himself up in a corner quite close to the wall, and judging of his opponent's approach by his breathing, made a blow at him and killed him on the spot.

This duel somewhat resembles the old story of the Englishman and Italian fighting, the latter making the same proviso of a dark room. The Englishman, after hunting about for some time in the dark, and not wishing to hurt his antagonist, at length sought for the fire-place, intending to discharge his pistol up it; he found it, and firing up it, to his horror he heard a yell of agony, and down tumbled the Italian, who had sought refuge there as the safest place.

Duelling and homicide, though for a Western State comparatively rare, still are not so very unfrequent, nor will they ever be so, till that barbarous custom of going continually armed is discontinued. There is

hardly one man out of fifty from St. Louis right down south, that does not always carry a bowie-knife or a revolver. A very agreeable man, at whose house we spent more than one evening, had shot a man dead a short time before in the middle of the day, on the steps of the Planters' house in the main street of St. Louis. He had been steward of a ball, and in that capacity had thought it his duty to refuse admittance to some individual of whose character he did not approve. The man swore vengeance, and declared he would shoot him the first time he met him. This happened a few days after, when he met my friend standing on the steps of the hotel: he immediately drew out a revolver and fired six shots at him, advancing as he fired. My friend received his fire without moving an inch, but directly the man had finished he drew his pistol, and walking towards him, gave him two shots, killing him on the spot. It certainly was a case of "justifiable homicide."

An incident of Western stoicism was related to me by a gentleman who was himself an eye-witness of it, that was worthy of the days of Brutus, and of some old Roman, (I forget his name,) that had his son (who had joined Catiline's conspiracy) executed in his presence, to save him the ignominy of a public execution with Lentulus, Cethegus, and others of his fellow traitors. My informant was travelling in Kentucky, when towards evening he made for a farm-house for shelter. On arriving at the door he found a number of men in rather an excited state crowding in. He jumped off his horse, and on pushing his way into the room he found two men engaged in deadly combat, with bowie knives. One was older and more

powerful than the other, and so evidently had the advantage in strength and skill, that the death of the younger seemed certain. My informant tried to rush forward, but was arrested by the iron hand of an old man, (who was leaning against the wall, smoking and looking on with apparent indifference,) who pulled him back, saying, "Stranger, don't mix in other men's quarrels." In the meantime the battle had been decided, and the younger man fell to the ground dead. The old man then stepped forward and approached the body—it was that of his son! and examined it without saying a word or changing a muscle. When he found it was quite dead he started back, and approaching the man that had killed him, said, "Now the quarrel is mine," and drawing his knife was going to revenge his son's death at once, but was prevented by the bystanders, and his opponent taken off; but although deprived of his revenge for the moment, it is likely he would never rest till either he or his son's destroyer were dead,—such is the moral and civilized state of the Far West.

The Mexican war afforded a vent for a great deal of the bad blood of the Union, and California afforded them an employment congenial to their tastes. But for the opportune discovery of it, the 60,000 volunteers that were under arms in Mexico at the end of the war would have turned their arms, in all likelihood, against Cuba, or some part of South America. They never would have settled down again as peaceful tillers of the soil; but California opened a field for them, and offered them a life of gaming, drinking, fighting, &c. to their hearts' content. We spent ten

days at St. Louis very pleasantly with the officers, waiting for a steamer with a reputation for safety, to descend to New Orleans.

The Americans, when on the travel, have a fashion of not shaving or putting on a clean shirt before breakfast: they hurry on their clothes, and rush down to breakfast, without any of the ablutions so customary with us; these are all performed *after* breakfast. It is in the Western States that all the peculiarities of slang and twang are most remarkable, more especially the "guessing." An American addressed an Englishman, who was not in a very amiable mood, on board one of the steamers. "I guess you're a stranger." "Yes," said the Englishman, "I am." "I guess you're a Britisher." "Right again." "Well, I guess—" "*Stop*," said the Englishman; "you've guessed often enough: it's my turn to guess now. I guess you're an inquisitive ass." This so took the American by surprise, he did not know what to say.

The society in St. Louis, like all the great towns, was very agreeable. We went to several parties, both in high and low life. The American women, as I think I have before remarked, are all very pretty up to about three-and-twenty; and some of them, if they were only a little stouter, and had better teeth, would be beautiful. The western ladies have a funny habit of using the expression, "and nothing else," in an affirmative answer to a question. "Have you been to the play?" "Yes, sir, and nothing else." I asked one young married lady if her husband had not returned the day before. "Yes, *and nothing else*." I did not know whether she was letting me into

any of the family secrets, or if it was merely a *façon de parler*. Our luggage had been forwarded from New York to a gun-maker at St. Louis, a very intelligent and clever man, who invited us to a tea and romp party, which we of course accepted, and enjoyed excessively.

The society in "low life," amongst the shopkeepers' families, though not so intellectual as the *haut ton*, was very amusing, and is, I imagine, like what American society was some thirty years back. The young ladies talk loud, and through their noses, and call one "*Sir*" with emphasis, and each other "Miss." I don't mean, by mentioning these peculiarities of speech, to laugh at the Americans. I have no doubt in the same class in England one would meet quite as much glaring vulgarity, and hear the queen's English mutilated much in the same manner.

The race of western trappers that Ruxton has immortalized have nearly all gone under, or settled in California or New Mexico. Few that he mentions were alive even in his time. Beaver skins don't repay them now, and the traders find it cheaper to purchase from the Indians themselves than to employ white men. If beaver skins rose again, I have no doubt the race would spring up again. The originals of La Bonté and Kilbuck were not known at St. Louis.

CHAPTER X.

AMERICAN PEOPLE—DICKENS—MANNERS—BOOKS—STEAMERS—SLAVES.

THE Americans are essentially a practical people, and make every use of the progressive improvements of the age, adapting in the most astonishingly short time all modern inventions to the every-day concerns of life. I cannot help thinking this praiseworthy striving after improvement is a good deal caused by the rivalry and jealousy existing between the different States. If New York starts an improvement before Boston, the latter does not rest until it has adopted the same on an improved principle if possible, and tries at the same time to excel New York in some other matter. This same honourable competition is visible all through the north, eastern and western States, but not in the south. It was this emulation between the rival republics of Athens and Corinth, which forced them on to a pitch of civilization, which they would not otherwise have acquired.

I met a senator (hot from Washington) who said that during the last session, when the slave question was being agitated in its most violent form, and party spirit ran very high, twice members drew pistols upon each other, once in the Senate and once in Congress: he said that he had not the slightest doubt but that

the southern members were armed to a man with bowies and pistols; and also that the northern men were nearly all so too; and if in the heat of passion and debate one shot had been fired, nobody could have told where it would have ended. I don't know which gives one the most exalted idea of an assembly elected by universal suffrage,—one where the members are armed to the teeth, and every now and then shake their pistols in each other's faces to assist in debate, as in America; or an assembly elected also by universal suffrage, defended from its electors by loaded cannon and an army of 5,000 troops, as in Paris.

The horses in the state of Kentucky are famous all over the union; the climate seems to be favourable to their growth. I saw many fine, well-shaped horses that would have carried fifteen stone well across country, if their constitution and endurance are equal to their appearance; but they did not give me the idea of being very hardy. The Americans prefer driving to riding, and when they do ride, they always trot and sit well back, legs well forward, and both hands tugging at the bridle as if they expected the horse's head to fall off.

During my stay in America I heard many people finding fault with Dickens. They said they did not object to his caricaturing them, that is his *métier*, and he does it to every nation and every class; but they say he is not amusing! (not so bad!) and that he has not seized the salient points of ridicule in the Yankee character. Now, with due respect to them, that is just what he has done; his Brown Forester in the Sketches, and his characters in Martin Chuzzlewit are drawn to the life. The fact is, that in their worship

of Dickens, as in their treatment of another lion, Jenny Lind for instance, who was worshipped like a deity, till she became unpopular in the south, where she was hooted and stoned, (so I read in the papers, but cannot vouch for the truth of it,) they "over-roasted" it, and because his head was not turned by their adulation, and by that means their worship of him became more conspicuous, they got rather ashamed of themselves, and tried to get out of it by turning round and abusing the object of it. The reasons that make the Americans so thin-skinned and touchy about any remark made on their manners and peculiarities are not very dissimilar from those of a boy who has lately taken to stick-up collars and tail-coats; he feels he is not quite a man, though he wishes every one to think so, and every action is intended to leave that impression on the bystanders, and any joke about his transition state is very unpalatable: so the Americans, (I don't mean those who have travelled, and who are as well-mannered as any European, but I mean the *mass* one meets travelling,) feeling that they do not quite possess European polish, are continually talking of the "elegance" and "style" of their society, and use a forced tone of politeness, especially to women, that has very much the stamp of vulgarity, and are very intolerant of ridicule and caricature.

The vaunted cheapness of books is one of the clap-traps of America; the only books that are sold cheap are pirated reprints (very bad ones generally) of European authors. All books where the copyright is bought, in their country, are very expensive. Prescott's History of Mexico, for instance, I could not buy under thirty shillings, Macaulay for two

shillings and sixpence! However, as ninety-nine books out of a hundred that are worth reading are European, the convenience is great; but even the reprints of our English books are not cheaper, nor so good, as our cheap publications; and Murray's Colonial Library, and Bohn's Library, and Reading for the Rail, are worth all the cheap editions in America. The public taste as regards light reading in America is very low; the books that command immediate sale on the railroads, steamers, &c., are such works as "The Mysteries of the Court of St. James," "Amours of the Children of George III.," and novels of a highly sentimental tendency, such as "The Evil One Unveiled, or the Red Whiskered Bargeman of Pentonville," "The Frantic Footman, or the Prodigal Reclaimed;" and the trash contained in them is quite incredible, hardly worthy of the *Weekly Dispatch* or the lowest journal in England.

It is in the west and south that one is particularly annoyed with the disgusting habit of spitting. I always imagined that the annoyance people pretended to feel about it might be an exaggerated affectation of nicety; but the more I saw of it, the more intolerable it became, and no exaggeration can make it appear worse than it really is. I would much rather be shut up with a madman than with a genuine expectorator. The steamers on the Mississippi are on the most gigantic scale, similar to those on the Hudson river, only not so well built, and with this very important difference, viz. they are high instead of low pressure. They are more like Noah's arks than anything else, three stories

high; the one we descended in, one of the largest on the river, drew under five feet when empty, and over ten feet of water with 1,300 tons of cotton, flour, &c. The engines and wheels were placed within thirty feet of the bows; the hurricane-house for the pilot was elevated some feet higher than the top of the funnel, to enable him to see the snags, sandbanks, &c. The largest sized steamers cost 12,000*l.* when new, all complete; they run two years as first class boats, and get the best prices for fares and freight, and after that they run till they burst their boilers as what are called half-dollar bursters. The fares are very low, twenty dollars from St. Louis to New Orleans, attendance, eating, and everything being included. The steamers are lighted by gas, not manufactured on board, though that may be done soon perhaps, but they take a supply in air-tight cases as regularly as they do a supply of water or fuel.

The company on board was very mixed, and as we got down south changed very much for the worse. One young man who embarked at St. Louis had been going a little too fast, and he was taking down half-a-dozen negroes to New Orleans to sell, just as you hear of a man sending up his horses to Tattersall's, with this difference, that whereas the horses are well groomed and looked after, these poor negroes were chained together, two and two, by the wrists, as if they had been convicts on their way to prison. They seemed very happy, however, and chatted away like so many monkeys; the thoughtless happiness, however, of the American slaves, which is always in the mouth of the free and enlightened

citizen as an argument in favour of slavery, is not the happiness of a human being, but that of an animal. It cannot arise from the exercise of the social affections—for their wife and children, their kindred and friends, and all the ties that we hold most dear, are to them a blank page; they are theirs only for the day, and they know they may be taken away at any moment;—it cannot be from the exercise of the intellect, or the faculties either of body or mind; but it is the happiness arising entirely from health and the freedom from care. The former is an enjoyment which the Creator has annexed to life, and of which not even the slave-master can deprive them. Their happiness is not even that of the higher order of animals, for, as Paley says, happiness arising from health alone is that of oysters, periwinkles, &c., and other sedentary animals.

The most natural instincts, which are common to all animals, are denied to the Negro. The affection of the mother for her child is not weighed in the balance for a second against the all-mighty dollar. Mothers and children are sold separately without any sort of compunction. As for the father, he never knows anything about his children; as often as he changes his master he changes his wife. One old fellow told me he had been sold nine times, and had a different wife at each new home. In England, and in most civilized countries, the boy who takes the eggs from the nest, and the young birds from the mother, is considered as showing a want of humanity; but the slave-owner who sells the mother from the children, and the children from the mother, incurs no censure whatever. The rights of property as

explained by the Scripture text, "Is it not lawful to do what I will with mine own?" distorted to suit their own views, is the answer always given in arguments of that kind. It does not follow that, because it is a man's interest to treat his slaves well, he always does so. It is not a man's interest to ride his horse to death in a good run; neither is it to the omnibus-driver's interest to overwork his horses; but still they do it. A rich man keeps his horses for his pleasure, not profit, and therefore he does not grudge them expense and comfort; but slaves are never kept for pleasure. Profit, and profit at any cost, is all the slave-owner thinks of, and to that he will, if necessary, sacrifice the health and comfort, and even the life itself of his slaves. The rich planter, when times are good, feeds his slaves well and houses them well; but the small poor proprietor does neither; he buys broken down negroes at a low figure; he feeds and houses them badly; they did not cost him much, and when they are worn out he can easily replace them.

You hear frequently of slaves who have been liberated returning to their masters, and begging to be taken into their service again; but this does not prove they were happy with their master: it only proves what is remarkable in all domesticated men and animals, that any home is better than none. Nobody will employ a liberated slave if they can possibly help it; and liberated by one master he sees himself repudiated by all the rest; an outcast from charity and humanity, and unable to procure the means of subsistence, he finds himself starving in the midst of plenty; the more he tries to avail himself of his

liberty and mix with the whites, the more he is made to feel his utterly debased condition, and he discovers when too late that whereas when he was a slave it was somebody's interest to keep him alive and in comparative health, now he is free it is nobody's. Is it any wonder, such being his position, that he should look to slavery as his only hope? Moreover, the liberating the old slave, (who from long habits of entire dependence on his master, and from feeling that he cannot dispose of his person without committing a kind of felony, has as it were lost all interest in himself, and even the power of providing for himself,) is about as humane as turning out an old hunter to pick up a bare subsistence on some common, when from having been fed upon corn and kept in a warm stable it is some time before he knows how to feed himself.

I heard a very painful case that happened at Memphis some short time before I was there. It is only a particular instance of cruelty which might, I have no doubt, be multiplied a dozen times, and which must continually take place when there is no law (not even a "Martin's Act") to protect the Negro from the passion and spite of his owner. A slave-dealer bought a slave from a plantation in Kentucky; the man was a first-rate mechanic and blacksmith, and his master only parted with him because he was "hard up," with the proviso that his wife, to whom he was much attached, should not be separated from him. The sum paid for him was 1,000$.—200*l.* after the sale; the slaves were taken as usual to the gaol to be lodged for the night, the Negro being satisfied by the promise that his wife

should accompany him the next day. The following morning, however, when the gang of slaves were brought out, chained two and two together by their wrists, preparatory to commencing their journey, the blacksmith looked in vain for his wife, and on inquiring where she was, the slave-driver laughed at him, and said: "Oh! you don't suppose I am going to drag your wife about to please you, do you? that was only a blind to get you from your master." The slave said nothing, but soon after he drew his chain companion to where there was a hatchet, and taking it up in his left hand, which was free, he deliberately chopped off his right hand at the wrist, and holding up the stump to the slave-driver, said: "There, you gave 1,000$ for me yesterday, what will you get now?"

This case created rather a feeling even in Kentucky, and a subscription was got up to buy the Negro back, and restore him to his wife; but the demon in human shape, his master, refused to part with him at any price, saying, "That he would not lose his revenge for having been made such a fool of, for ten thousand dollars; that as the man chose to cut his own hand off, he should learn to pick cotton with the other, and he would take care he lived long enough to repent of what he had done." There was no law to interfere, not even to control his brutality, and in a few days the slave was marched off south. Can anything much worse be instanced in the most cruel days of Rome and her emperors? The sufferings even of Catiline's slaves that he chained up to the necks in his fish-ponds to be devoured piecemeal by lampreys, were of shorter duration than the sufferings of this man.

A slave can get no protection from the cruelty of his master; the law, and, what is of much more importance, public opinion, countenances the corporeal punishment of slaves. The slave has no legal existence whatever in the Slave States; for in the drawing up of legal acts he is described as an article of property by the word "*it*;" consequently his oath is not admissible in a court of law. One of the striking features in slavery to an Englishman is the perfectly cold-blooded manner in which it is treated and talked of by the press and individuals. In Virginia, where they breed slaves largely, the business is carried on as systematically, and they take as much pains to keep up a good breeding stock (drafting the weak and sickly ones), as they do for south-downs or short-horns in England. The slave-dealers know the men that raise the best stock, and they go down and buy at their fairs as our horse-dealers do in the north of England. You read quotations in the papers—"A good business done in strong healthy negroes with good characters, old stock rather heavy." In the New Orleans papers every week we saw advertisements that "Mr. So-and-so will sell by auction, on such a day, fifty or sixty fine useful young negroes, warranted sound and free from vice," which means lying, thieving, and drunkenness. Dealers buy up young promising negroes unbroke, and give them a smattering of some trade and sell them to advantage. You continually see advertisements—"Wanted to purchase, a good cook." (Or in fact any household servant.) "A first-rate price paid for a first-rate article."

You hear of a "fast" man running through his

negroes as another does his acres in Europe, and some planters sell their slaves as regularly after the cotton picking or sugar grinding seasons as men do their carriage horses after the London, or their hunters after the hunting season.

The Americans continually advance the absurd argument about the blacks being the descendants of Ham, and consequently destined by a divine curse to perpetual slavery; and defend their own conduct by saying they are only the unworthy (?) inflictors of this curse. This fallacious argument they strengthen by asserting that the African is intellectually very little removed from the brute, and that his head shows a most marked inferiority in intellectual organization to the white. However true this may be of the *native* African, it cannot be advanced as an argument for continuing slavery to the *negro creole* of America. In America hardly any of the slaves have been less than three generations in the country, and the skull of an African who has for that time been an inhabitant of a temperate climate partakes more of the intellectual development of the European than of that of the native African, and is very nearly if not quite equal to his master's. I have seen slaves, men and women, sold at New Orleans, who were very nearly as white as myself, and with quite as good a phrenological development. Seeing mulattoes and quadroons sold, and watching the blush of shame mantling on the face of a slave who feels his degradation as keenly or more so than his master would if he were in his place, is to my mind the most disgusting feature in slavery; although it is not actually worse to buy or sell a man or woman who is nearly white, than it

is to sell one some shades darker, yet there is something in it more revolting to one's feelings. The blacks and mulattos must have education and opportunity before they can show that the prejudice concerning the inferiority of their intellect is unfounded; and this opportunity the Americans take good care they never shall have. So long as ignorance exists on the one hand, and determination that it *shall* exist remains on the other, the possibility of the intellectual improvement of the negro is out of the question.

That the negro sometimes possesses an intellect, and that too of a very high order, is evident from a fact mentioned by Dr. Rush of Philadelphia. A negro in that city had a most wonderful faculty for mental calculation, and could in an almost incredibly short space of time solve and unravel the most complexed questions in numbers. Being asked one day before a number of strangers how many seconds a man of seventy years some odd months and days had lived, he told the exact number in a minute and a half. When one of the gentlemen had himself made the calculation he said it was too large. "Yes, massa," said the nigger, "but you forget the Leap-years!" And such was the case.

The Americans in the nineteenth century greatly exceed the ancients in the degree of servitude they inflict on their slaves. The ancients were content with enslaving the body, and left the mind free to improve and expand itself. Æsop and Terence were both slaves. In America they enslave both mind and body. Total ignorance, and the absence of all knowledge of their rights and position, are the

greatest safeguards the masters have over their slaves, and to ensure these the most stringent laws are enacted by the different State Governments. Heavy fines and imprisonments are the punishment inflicted on any who attempt to teach the negro to read or write; and a missionary who should come into the Southern states for the sake of imparting religious instruction, would have as much chance of escaping summary punishment, or lynching, as a woodcock in a spinney in Norfolk, surrounded by a dozen crack shots.

Many of the States have prohibited the emancipation of slaves, except under such heavy securities and liabilities as render it next to impossible; a master cannot say to his slave, "You have served me well, I make you free," unless he can previously get the permission of the Assembly of his State, and find security that the slave shall not be a burden on the State. No slave can purchase his liberty without his master's consent, and the better he is and the more money he earns, the less likely his master is to part with him. In Cuba, on the contrary, a slave can procure his freedom for the same sum of money that his master gave for him; if he thinks that too high he can appeal to a jury. I heard a distressing story of a planter, who from the difficulty of getting the consent of the Legislative Assembly, and the impossibility of finding the proper securities, had been unable to effect the emancipation of his slaves, and was haunted on his death-bed by the pleasant knowledge, that the moment the breath had left his body, his favourite slaves, and in some instances his own children, would be sold to the highest bidder. Numbers

of these cases occur. Immediately after the death of President Jefferson, his illegitimate children were sold by public auction at New Orleans. The legal and social position of the negro in the free and slave States are in inverse proportion to each other. In the slave States he has, as I said before, no legal existence whatever. In the northern free States, on the contrary, he has the legal position of a citizen, the right of voting, &c.; but if he dared to avail himself of his privilege, and show himself at the poll, or attempt to enter a theatre amongst the whites, or take his place in the first-class cars, he would be turned out as sure as possible. His social position in the south is better than in the north; he is treated equally as a dog in both, with this difference, that in the south he is sometimes a pet dog, whereas in the north he is always a cur, kicked and hooted on every occasion. The fact is, that in proportion as the legal barrier between the races is lowered, the prejudice of colour and public opinion becomes stronger. In the States that have abolished slavery, and in those where it never existed, the feeling of prejudice against colour and contact with a negro in any way is twice as strong as in the south. In the free States, if a negro is ill-treated he can complain, but he has white men to judge his cause, and the prejudice of colour and public opinion have most probably settled the verdict upon his case previous to its going before them. In theatres, a negro dare not show his face out of the particular part of the house set aside for him. In the hospital he is never admitted into the white men's wards; when praying, he must not do it in a white man's church; and

when dead, gold cannot buy him the privilege of being buried in a white man's burial-ground. Such is liberty and equality as understood in America. Hurrah for the American Constitution! which commences,—"That whereas all men are born free, and equal, and alike," &c.

Molière's lines in "L'Etourdi," slightly altered, describe the nature of liberty as it exists in the Southern states, with great correctness:—

> "La liberté n'est que franche grimace,
> Qu'une ombre de vertu qui garde mal la place,
> Et qui s'évanouit, comme l'on peut savoir,
> Au rayon du soleil, qu'une bourse fait voir."

Poor old Liberty! she must be a tough old lady to stand all the rough usage and knock-down blows, to say nothing of the almost total loss of character she has sustained during the last eight hundred years. Hoodwinked and made an egregious fool of, throwing open prisons, and hobnobbing with thieves and murderers one day, a bloody tyrant destroying some of her best friends the next,—she, and her half-sister, Religion, have been made the scape-goats for half the gigantic atrocities the world has seen. She must have a good opinion of herself, or she could not avoid seeing how few love her for herself, or for the benefits she confers on mankind, and how many of her professed admirers seek only to swell the train of license that frequently follows in her wake. How often, like Laius, does she contend for existence with her own children; and how often, like him, is she destined to fall by their hands!

Equality is the brazen image the Americans worship; Liberty is the name they give it. There is as much

liberty under the Pasha of Egypt, or an eastern autocrat, as there is in the Slave states of America. Johnson defined "liberty" as a "state opposed to slavery." The Americans define it, as a "state connected with slavery." If liberty consists in the right of six or seven millions of men to keep three or four millions of their fellow-men in the most degrading state of abject servitude that the world has ever seen, then they have it. If it consists in the freedom of speech and action, they have it not. A man may say or do what he likes in Russia, if he *dare;* so he may in America, if he dare. *Public opinion,* that hundred-headed hydra, and the tyranny of the majority, that most intolerant and bigoted of all tyrannies, rules America with a rod of iron. In the southern States a man cannot say what he pleases; his life would not be safe for one instant if he did. I was warned in the steamer on the Mississippi by a gentleman I was talking to on the subject, not to speak too loud; "for," said he, "if you are overheard, and they thought you were an abolitionist, they would hustle you over the side, and no one would know who did it." If a republican were to preach a crusade in Russia against the "powers that be," and proclaim equality and the rights of man, and the emperor were to have him shot, who would feign such horror of intolerance, and such detestation of tyranny as the Americans? where would the papers teem with such rabid articles?

Reverse the case;—suppose the Emperor of Russia sent an envoy to the Southern states to preach emancipation, would they tolerate him? No. They would lynch him in a moment; and every paper in the

Union would be filled with articles about the disgraceful interference with national property,—the glorious expression of public opinion, &c. The Americans are fond of saying—"Oh! the English should not talk about slavery, when they showed us the example." Yes: but we also showed them the example of abolishing it, at an enormous sacrifice. It was not abolished in the northern or western states from any sense of right or wrong, it was with them merely a question of pecuniary advantage. It was proved, without doubt, that white labour was more lucrative where it could be procured, and where the climate was not injurious to health, than black labour. This is especially the case in the western states, where the extraordinary influx of emigrants renders labour comparatively cheap. It is found cheaper to employ a white labourer at a dollar a day, when actually wanted, than to have to keep a negro all the year round, half of which perhaps he is not required; moreover there is the chance of the loss of the capital invested in him, by sickness or otherwise. It is now fully proved that agriculture cannot be advantageously carried on by slave labour; Indian wheat, corn, and other grain crops, when once in the ground require little labour till harvest time, but in the cultivation of sugar-cane, cotton, and rice, especially the latter, which is cultivated on the sea-board of the Atlantic, amongst swamps that are fatal to the white man, slave labour can be made remunerative, though I believe there is little doubt that free white labour, at a moderate price, would be more so. Moreover, in the western states there is a great deal of cant about the "dignity of labour." A native

American will on no account work in company with a negro, as he considers he lowers himself, and the "dignity of his labour," by doing so. There is a very strong native American feeling in the western states; it consists of an excessively exalted opinion of themselves individually and collectively, and an almost Napoleon-like confidence in their destiny. A native American is one born in America, and I heard a story exemplifying the innate rights of man in a view almost strong enough to suit Mr. Midshipman Easy.

An Irishman beat his son, (a boy about ten years old, and who, from being born in the country, was a "native American,") for some misdemeanour: the boy was very indignant, and said it was not the beating he cared for, but the being beaten by an Irishman (although his father) :—he could not stand that!

According to the census, the slaves amount to between three and four millions—I expect they are considerably nearer the five than the three millions, and they are continually increasing. People look forward to the time when they will be emancipated, either by their own exertions, or by the State government; I do not see the slightest chance of either. As for doing it themselves, it is out of the question: without arms, organization, or direction, any revolt would only be followed by a war of extermination, which would not cease whilst there was a woolly head remaining in North America. The debased state of feeling amongst the slaves, which makes them fawn on the hand that strikes them, and prompts them to imitate their masters in every way; and the pride with

which the Mulatto cherishes any tinge of white blood as a distinctive mark that separates him from the black negro and attaches him to the white man, would always ensure a large majority supporting their masters in any rising that might take place, and would paralyse any united attempt at revolt. Even if the government *wished* to liberate them, how are they to do it? they cannot buy four millions of slaves, at prices varying from a hundred to five hundred dollars. The South would never willingly give up their slaves for nothing, and the North would never insist on their doing so. The abolitionists are a very small minority of loud-talking men, who are just tolerated in the north, but who dare not show themselves in the western or southern states; and I am convinced the abolition agitation is only thrown in the teeth of the south more to annoy them, than with any idea that it is a consummation likely to take place, or even to be desired. Another very embarrassing fact is, that many of the southern properties, with their attendant slaves, are mortgaged to northern capitalists,—and catch them giving up one single bright dollar to liberate a single black negro! The recent annexation of two such enormous tracts of country as Texas and New Mexico, both essentially fitted for the cultivation of sugar and cotton, has raised the price of slaves essentially.

Manufactories are also springing up in many of the Southern states worked by slaves. This is proved to be the most lucrative way of employing them, and will probably increase their value still more. Moreover, though the Americans may make their slaves free, they cannot give them liberty, or

equality of rights; so that though ceasing to be a slavery of individuals, it will continue to be a slavery of races. The re-enactment of the Fugitive Slave Bill last year, the most iniquitous bill ever framed by human beings, is a proof of the feeling of the country against the negro, and how little justice and humanity are considered when he is concerned. The bill was to enable slave-owners to recover slaves who had run away at any former period; and even individuals who had escaped upwards of thirty years were with their children, who had never known slavery, seized in Boston and other free cities, and taken back to slavery! Some cases even more cruel happened, where the parents being dead, the children who had been born and brought up as free men and women were claimed as the children of slaves, and hurried to interminable slavery! Is it credible that in this *free* country, the champion of liberty, as she calls herself, and in the nineteenth century, such a law as this could be revived and acted up to with the most unflinching severity? The extreme vehemence with which the question of emancipation is argued by the slave-owners on one side and the abolitionists on the other, goes far to prevent anything being done towards ameliorating the condition of the slaves. While one party demands everything, and nothing will satisfy them but total emancipation, the other refuses to abate one jot in the treatment of what they choose to consider their property. They say, and with some truth, It is all very well for you northern men, who have nothing to lose and everything to gain by the abolition of slavery, to say, Liberate your slaves for the sake of principles—(it is

for the *principal* they keep them, I guess):—put yourself in our position, and what would you do then?

Thus, whilst one party demands everything, and the other refuses anything, nothing at all is done, and the disease keeps increasing till it will some day endanger the health of the body politic. Come to some termination it must; how or when, nobody can form any idea: no preparations whatever are being made by the South to "put their house in order," and no plan mooted for the increased emancipation of slaves. Difficult though it may be to point out any remedy for so disgraceful an institution, yet one cannot but think it doubly disgraceful, when one sees the question avoided by all the clever men of the country; and whenever it is forced upon the attention of an unwilling assembly by some abolitionist more energetic than the rest, slurred over in haste, and its existence cemented by a disgraceful compromise, as was done last year in the Omnibus Bill. The abolitionists are quite as much to blame as the southern men; for at the same time that they hold white-chokered meetings, expressing in the strongest terms their abhorrence of slavery, and their commiseration, even affection, for anything black, and get up subscriptions to send tracts and red flannel waistcoats to the little negroes on the Gold coast, they yet, without the slightest attempt at resistance, suffer the poor slave that has escaped, and (trusting to their expressions of sympathy) had taken refuge among them, to be torn from his home, or carried back to an enraged master. Not one single step, either for the amelioration, or for the gradual emancipation of slaves, has been taken, and

every year more stringent laws are passed to prevent their instruction or manumission. What a farce it is to see the senate, at one moment voting a supply for the establishment of steamers to carry free niggers to Liberia, and at the next, voting for the extension of slavery over Texas and New Mexico, a country nearly equalling in size a quarter of the whole Union, and where slavery, though once established, had been abolished by the Mexicans, a people whom the Americans affect to despise. Liberia is a decided farce; for whereas less than twelve thousand slaves have been taken there during the last twelve years, the births among them during that time have been nearly one million.

CHAPTER XI.

VOYAGE DOWN THE MISSISSIPPI TO NEW ORLEANS.

A COMPANY has undertaken to make a railroad from Cairo, at the junction of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, to Mobile, a considerable town on the Gulf of Mexico, about 100 miles east of New Orleans. By this means, a distance of 400 miles out of 860 will be saved, and all the losses of life and property, arising from the difficulty of the navigation and the recklessness of the steamboat captains and engineers, will be obviated. I met the engineer who had made the surveys for it; he had no doubt it would be accomplished, the unhealthiness of the labour near the shore of the Mexican Gulf being the only objection: but that is not of much importance where Irish emigrants are plenty. When this railroad is finished, Mobile will be in a fair way to eclipse New Orleans; the situation is better, both as a port and with regard to health.

A voyage down the Mississippi is very tiresome, and when the novelty of the life has a little worn off, it becomes most irksome. The monotony of the swampy banks for the whole distance from St. Louis to the sea is unbroken by a single bluff, or picturesque view. The water is thick and muddy, and

rolls along over sand-bars or mud-banks, winding and lengthening its course, as if dreading its junction with the ocean, in the most unnecessary and aggravating manner. So crooked is its channel, that the mouth of the Ohio, which in a straight line is only 450 miles from the Gulf of Mexico, by the river is 860. It might be shortened at least 250 miles, by cutting through eight or ten necks of land, some not more than thirty yards broad. From the softness of the banks, the river is continually changing its course: and what was mainland yesterday is an island to-day, and *vice versâ*.

The Missouri is the larger stream of the two, and stamps its own character upon the Mississippi, changing its speed and colour most completely. The Mississippi is not increased in width from the junction of any of its great tributaries, but is considerably deepened. It generally runs about three miles an hour; but amongst the islands and shoals, it runs much faster. A great number of islands, some of them of considerable extent, are scattered over this mighty river; and it is frequently almost impossible to know when the land on either hand is an island or the main.

Below Red River the country becomes very low and swampy, and has an imperceptible inclination towards the sea, in consequence of which, the waters of the Mississippi below this tributary stream, which overflow their banks, never regain the main channel, but pursue their course alone and by innumerable channels, dividing the country into numerous islands, to the Mexican Gulf.

As you approach the mouth of the river, you find

ample proof that, the same causes which formed the island of New Orleans, and the land opposite, are still at work, rapidly laying the foundation for future lands in the gulf: the mouths are changing every day: old channels are blocked up, and the stream forces new ones. A single tree of the millions that are annually swept down this mighty stream, when stopped by its roots or branches in any one of these channels, is sufficient to obstruct the passage of a thousand more, that would otherwise have drifted out clear. Astonishing net-works of trees thus formed may be seen at the entrance of many of the small creeks about Belize, which had once been mouths. No force can remove them—the impetus of the stream itself, and the mud carried down by it, do but cement and bind them the more closely; and in ten years from the formation of one of these bars, it is calculated that vegetation shows itself on shoals thus formed. The Mississippi resembles the Nile in two or three respects:—The fertilizing slime which the annual floods spread over the surrounding country, and the numerous mouths (more likely "seventy times seven" than the *Septem Ostia Nili*) through which it finds its way into an almost inland sea.

The dangers of snagging, bursting, &c., are not in the least exaggerated; but fortunately we had a steady captain, good pilot, teetotaller engineer, and a valuable cargo, so that all racing was declined; and we arrived safely after a passage of ten days —the same time they take to cross the Atlantic! Once when we were aground on a sand-bar, and the engines were snorting and groaning in a most

unpleasant manner, I had the curiosity to go and look at the steam gauge; I found the pressure was 140 lbs. to the square inch—I immediately retired as near the stern as possible. On asking the engineer about it, he said he had seen 200! but he did not think it safe!

The wooding at night was a very picturesque scene; the shore illuminated by numbers of large wood-fires, throwing a red lurid glare over the muddy stream; the huge steamer, which kept on puffing and snorting and yelling, as if impatient to get on, and every now and then letting off its steam with a roar and a quivering motion that gave one very uncomfortable ideas of the state of compression it must have been in before; the numbers of wild-looking naked negroes, shining like so many wet macintoshes, carrying enormous loads of wood, and swarming up and down the bank and over the long plank into the steamer, like a nest of black ants; while black figures, on whom one almost expected to see horns and a tail, were hurrying about the huge fires on shore, and feeding and raking them up with great pitchforks,—gave one quite an idea of the lower regions! and reminded me of an old picture I saw in Spain, where the black gentleman and his friends are employed in much the same manner, merrily toasting the souls of unfortunate heretics, consigned to that warm abode by the infallible decrees of the merciless Inquisition.

All the old jokes about the steamers drawing so little water, that they can cross the country anywhere after a heavy dew; and the fact, that when the water is very low and the channel intricate, the captain

walks ahead with a lantern, &c., are repeated to travellers first steaming down the Mississippi. The pilot told me that in the worn-out steamers they cannot afford to have negro stokers—they are too expensive. Every time a boiler bursts, they would lose so many dollars'-worth of slaves; whereas, by getting Irishmen at a dollar a-day they pay for the article as they get it, and if it is blown up, why they get another, and only lose a day's wages by the transaction. He said that the very worst steamers, which even Irishmen would not go in, are stoked by old worn-out niggers who were good for nothing else—pleasant work in one's old age! Just as we arrived at Memphis, a little excitement was visible; a runaway negro, goaded to distraction at being retaken, had struck his master; he was lynched on the spot. Memphis was, some years ago, the scene of one of the most extensive executions on the principle of Judge Lynch that has taken place in the Union. Seventeen of the gamblers and bullies, who once held rule upon the banks of the Mississippi, and were the terror of all the peacefully-minded travellers, were seized and lynched by the enraged citizens of Memphis. A very good riddance; and if the lynch-law was always as well directed as in this latter instance, there would not be much reason to abuse it; but lately, in California, some of the most frightful murders have been committed under the specious pretence of the necessity of immediate justice.

I could not help being amused at the commiseration expressed for a certain doctor, a large slave-owner, who had just lost ten negroes by the sinking of a boat in the river! Not a feeling of pity was vouchsafed to

the unfortunate negroes; but he, poor man! it was a heavy loss to him, especially as just at that time negroes were looking up; and moreover, his losses during the cholera season had been very heavy!

We were not sorry to arrive at New Orleans about the end of January. Two hours on the Mississippi are sufficient for all the purposes of instruction and amusement, and eleven days are rather *de trop*. It does not increase one's feelings of amiability, and I could almost understand the restless desire for any break in the monotony of the voyage, which prompts passengers to induce their captains to race, even at the risk of their lives.

In consequence of the St. Charles Hotel having been entirely destroyed by fire a few days before our arrival, we had great difficulty in getting located. The winter is the season at New Orleans; in fact, it is the only season of the year in which an Englishman has a moderate chance of existing. During the whole winter the city is thronged with cotton speculators; agents from all parts of the Old and New World, "Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics." Most of the great English mercantile houses have accredited agents to speculate in cotton. I had no idea mercantile affairs were so entirely a matter of speculation. People make bets about the probable rise and fall in the price of cotton, and book them in the same way as a man does his bets on the "Derby." It appears that the real amount of the yield of cotton is never exactly known, and all the great speculators have touts, who are despatched into the different cotton districts to send information to their employers. As their accounts differ considerably, so

does the spirit of gambling increase, each man considering his information better than his neighbour's, and backing it accordingly. Fortunes are made and lost as quickly as on the Stock Exchange, and numbers of bankruptcies occur every winter. The cotton-pods are fit for gathering about the middle of December, and begin to arrive at New Orleans through the months of January and February. They are packed in large bales, about five feet square, for transportation down the river, and when arrived at New Orleans, are packed again under an enormous steam power, by which several bales are compressed into one, for transport across the Atlantic.

A steamer coming down the Mississippi laden with bales of cotton up to the very top of the funnel, has a curious appearance. It gives one the idea of five or six enormous hayricks, joined together and covered with a sail-cloth, seized with a sudden fit of locomotion, and dashing about in a reckless manner at the rate of ten or twelve miles an hour. New Orleans is the Wapping of America, and during the dryest weather resembles that delightful portion of the metropolis of England after a Thames flood. Imagine what it must be after a flood of the Mississippi! It is situated on the eastern bank of the river, which there makes a curve from west to east, a fact that gives it the name of the Crescent city.

Dig anywhere you will, you come to water in two feet, generally in eighteen inches; so that in funerals, that portion of the Burial Service which commits "dust to dust," ought to be dispensed with, and the service appointed for burials at sea adopted in its place. A hole is dug in the ground, and instead of the

coffin being lowered into it by ropes, it is shot down lengthways, and disappears under the thin crust of earth, like a stick under ice, to find a last *abode*, not *resting-place*, amongst the alligators and snapping turtle of Lake Pontchartrain, and the surrounding swamps.

The foundations of the houses are very extraordinary. A raft, the size of the required foundation, is made of three-inch planks, and sunk a certain depth in the slime, and the houses built upon it, evidently with a view to be prepared for any sudden floods that may float them from their present moorings.

I was quite astonished at seeing the foundations of some of the houses that were building, and could hardly be persuaded that abodes so founded could be safe. There is one thing to be said, however, that as by a recent computation every house in New Orleans is burnt, or ought to be burnt, every fifty years, the foundations are not required to last for ever. The foundations are apt to rise or fall with a succession of floods or dry weather, so that the sides of the houses do not always quite retain their original perpendicular position. The level of the river is about three feet higher than the town; any rent, therefore, in the levee or dyke, which extends about a hundred miles above the city, and which in some places is very frail, causes great disquietude to the inhabitants. In 1850 a breach was made some five miles above the town, and it was in rather a precarious state, there being every chance of the inhabitants awaking some morning and finding themselves tossing about on their respective rafts in the Gulf of

Mexico—a fleet of streets and squares, with two or three enormous hotels and theatres as a convoy! In walking through the city after dark, you are perpetually startled by some great slimy rat, about the size of a young pig, starting almost from under your feet: they actually swarm in New Orleans, and you hear them wallowing and sloshing (?) about in the gutters, like the accounts one reads of the hippopotami in Africa—*parvis componere magna.*

One evening, a large party of liberators, patriots, or whatever is the name assumed by the late piratical invaders of Cuba, assembled in the streets under the windows of our hotel to serenade General Quitman, Lopez, and some other notorieties, whose prosecution by the United States Government, (the most farcical affair that has ever, I should think, thrown contempt and ridicule on a court of justice,) had just been abandoned. The Americans are not heaven-born musicians at the best of times, and when half-tipsy, as was the case in the present instance, the only tunes they have any idea of are "Yankee Doodle," "Hail Columbia, happy land!" &c. These they yelled out in most delightful discord, every man following his own time and tune to the end, when if he found himself there too soon, he started again to keep time with the main body; while there sat the liberators, champions of liberty, &c. "liquoring freely," and sucking in slings, cock-tails, &c. like heroes, as they were. You would have imagined that an atmosphere of slavery would be as fatal to their free lungs as the breath of an anaconda; but they received their brandy (raw, of course, for heroes!) from the hands of slaves, actually without swooning, or even without

a shudder passing through their philanthropic frames, smiling complacently at each other, and talking magniloquently about their own glorious liberty, and the tyranny and contemptible servility of the Spaniards; subjects that were only interrupted for a moment by some son of freedom more thirsty than the rest, getting impatient for his liquor, and denouncing in frightful language some wretched nigger, who had had the misfortune to be born in the land of the free! Certainly, the best friends of America, and the Americans themselves, cannot but allow that it is a land of contradiction and humbug; a land where, as I before said, "fifteen millions of freemen and three millions of slaves, are eternally celebrating their freedom, their enlightenment, and their equality:" and where delicacy is so easily shocked, that one is in constant dread of using words that in England are of hourly parlance; and yet where opera dancing of the most *prononcé* style is patronised by the most fastidious; where the "members" (*Anglicè*, legs) of the pianos are clothed in pantaloons, while the "members" of the dancers are applauded according to their nudity. Dr. Johnson affirms, that the fact of being easily shocked does not always arise from a perfect purity of ideas; but that, on the contrary, a "*nice* person is one of habitually nasty ideas," and that it is owing to his habitual turn of thought that he is apt to perceive impropriety where none is intended; therefore the Americans have good authority for dispensing with what one cannot avoid considering in many instances as most unnecessary mock modesty. However, ladies are much the same in all ages, I expect. Some old Roman, Martial,

I believe, treating of that very subject, mock modesty, says, "In Brutus' presence Lucretia blushed and laid the book aside: when he retired, she took it up again and read."

> "Erubuit, posuitque meum Lucretia librum;
> Sed coram Bruto. Brute recede, legit."

I heard a good repartee made on that very point. An American lady being dreadfully shocked at some observation an English gentleman had made, and in which she imagined she detected some impropriety, said she was astonished at his not having more respect for her presence. "I beg your pardon, madam," said he, "and am very sorry that I should have offended your delicacy; but my excuse is, that what I meant was not what you were thinking of." *Honi soit qui mal y pense.* The idea was *not* a new one, but the application was good.

The resident proprietors of New Orleans are chiefly French. The English and American merchants and cotton speculators swarm there during the winter and spring months, but fly, if possible, at the first breath of summer.

The French creoles are very fond of amusement, particularly of plays and operas. There is a very good French operatic company there, and I heard "Le Prophète" well performed several times. On one occasion I had the misfortune to be present when a poor woman who was figuring away in the "Pas des Patineurs" fell and broke her ankle. The house, every night I was there, was crowded with what the papers called "elegantly dressed females," chiefly French. They were seemingly

adored by moustached and bearded dandies, with Parisian cut coats, and a most undeniable odour of tobacco, &c. Some of the ladies were excessively pretty, and dressed in remarkably good taste. The only peculiarity that struck me to their disadvantage, was the reckless use they made of paint: I recognised many lovely faces, which one evening were *blanches comme la blanche ermine,* appear the next glowing like the "red, red rose." Painting is a great mistake at all times; but there is more excuse for it at New Orleans than at most places, as the sallowness of complexion, induced by the damp unhealthy climate, is very disfiguring.

I made a point of going to some of the quadroon balls. I had heard a great deal of the splendid figures and graceful dancing of the New Orleans quadroons, and I certainly was not disappointed. Their movements are the most easy and graceful that I have ever seen. They danced one figure, somewhat resembling the Spanish fandango, without castanets, and I never saw more perfect dancing on any stage. I wonder some of the opera lessees in Europe do not import some for their *corps de ballet:* the expense, I conclude, is against it. A handsome quadroon could not be bought for less than one thousand or fifteen hundred dollars! though the market is well supplied at that price. These balls take place in a large saloon: at the entrance, where you pay half a dollar, you are requested to leave your *implements,* by which is meant your bowie-knifes and revolvers; and you leave them as you would your overcoat on going into the opera, and get a ticket with their number, and on your way out they are returned to you. You

hear the pistol and bowie-knife keeper in the arms-room call out, "No. 46—a six-barrelled repeater." "No. 100—one eight-barrelled revolver, and bowie knife with a death's-head and cross-bones cut on the handle." "No. 95—a brace of double-barrels." All this is done as naturally as possible, and you see fellows fasten on their knives and pistols as coolly as if they were tying on a comforter or putting on a coat.

As I was going up stairs, after getting my ticket, and replying to the quiet request, "whether I would leave my arms," that I had none to leave, I was stopped and searched from head to foot by a policeman, who, I suppose, fancied it impossible that I should be altogether without arms. Notwithstanding all this care murders and duels are of weekly occurrence at these balls, and during my stay at New Orleans there were three. There are more murders here than in any other city in the Union. In the first place, everybody drinks hard, and every man is armed; and a man who does not avenge an insult on the spot is despised. It is a word and a blow, and not unfrequently the blow without the word.

The southern men are naturally hot blooded, and duelling is part of their creed; and the northern men, who come down south, what with drink, gambling, and the excitement of speculation, are not apt to be very backward in taking up a quarrel. A "difficulty," as it is called, took place in the bar-room of the hotel where I was staying between two young men, and one of them was killed. There were about a hundred men present, but not one of them interfered to stop it; nobody arrested the homicide, and after quietly wiping his knife he

walked away. I asked one old gentleman who was present whether he would not be arrested and tried. He said they would have him up before the magistrates on the morrow; but that his opponent had called him a liar, which was quite a sufficient provocation for stabbing him. He said there was a glorious expression of public feeling in New Orleans in favour of justifiable homicide, and that no jury could find a man guilty who, as in this case, had had any provocation. The character of the population of New Orleans is worse now than it has ever been, in consequence of the numbers of returned Californians, with all their reckless habits and notions. Some idea of the gambling spirit of speculation in this city may be gathered from the fact that the *Atlantic*, steamer, after being thirty days over her time, was insured here at fifty per cent.! A real go-a-head Yankee will insure all creation for half nothing! During my fortnight's residence at New Orleans, the *Autocrat* steamer was run down, and forty passengers drowned; the *John Adams* burst, and burned a hundred and forty; and another steamer, laden with cotton, took fire and burned sixty passengers; all which casualties, as I before remarked, did not so much as elicit a larger type, or any "additional particulars" from the editors.

I did not in any way admire New Orleans or its inhabitants, though I met some most agreeable exceptions. If liberty consists in a man being allowed to shoot and stab his neighbour on the smallest provocation, and to swagger drunk about the streets, then certainly the Crescent city is the place in which to seek for it, for they have enough and to spare. But

if liberty consists in safety to life and property, and the sacrificing the liberty of the individual to the benefit of the community, then they know nothing of it in New Orleans but the name. In Boston you may not by law smoke in the streets, or drink any spirits whatever, under pain of a heavy fine. In New Orleans you may be drunk in the streets the whole day with impunity, if you choose. Hurrah for consistency!

At length, after a fortnight's residence at the "Crescent city," we determined to bid adieu to its bar-rooms and slave-markets, its fat rats, steam-boat explosions, fires, duels, murders, &c., not with much regret on my side, I confess, and engaged our passage in a small barque for the Havana.

On taking leave of a country, it is natural to compare the expectations one had previously formed of the nature of the country itself, and the manners and customs of the inhabitants, with one's parting convictions, derived from actual experience; and to consider whether during the course of the visit one has gained any knowledge, or been disabused of any unfounded prejudice. The time was now come for me to bid adieu to America, and I could not but feel that the months I had spent in travelling through the country had been well spent in many ways; for at the same time that I was proud to find that my own nation and country could well bear a comparison with her daughter and younger rival, I also acquired a great respect and admiration for a kind-hearted energetic people, whom on this side the Atlantic it is too much the custom (though a most mistaken one, and founded on prejudice and ignorance) to

consider as behind us in every way. I was frequently forced to admit, that though we do most things well in England, yet that they do some things even better in America.

No expectations regarding the natural grandeur and wealth of the American continent can be disappointed. Her magnificent rivers, her lakes, her forests, the richness of her soil, and her mineral wealth, are unequalled in the length and breadth of the world; and with the golden soil of California on the one hand, and the tin and copper regions of Lake Superior and Galena on the other, it is hard to say whether the coming age is destined to be one of gold or of brass: there is plenty of the latter current at present amongst the inhabitants.

With respect to the people, I was very agreeably surprised. Far from meeting with that incivility which I had been led to expect was the lot of most travellers, and of the English in particular, I was not once annoyed with any rude inquisitiveness; and I found that hospitality, and that too of the most agreeable kind, was the *rule* and not the *exception* throughout the Union. Any foreigner landing in America with a single good letter of introduction will be franked from one town to another, and be cordially greeted in all.

With regard to the republican government itself, I was neither pleased nor disappointed. It was what I expected, neither so cheap, or Utopian, or so free from jobbing and sinecure patronage as its admirers assert, nor so utterly impotent as regards all federal purposes as its detractors maintain. It is certainly not so powerful to restrain internal com-

motions as our own form of government, and I am now *convinced,* where before I only *believed,* that the government and institutions of America, although in many ways working admirably in that country, are not by any means suited to us; and that the man who advocates a Republic in Great Britain, does so either from sheer ignorance, or from a worse motive. The energy and intelligence of the American people in applying the inventions and improvements of modern science to all the comforts and conveniences of life, I have before mentioned as being beyond all praise. But what chiefly affects an Englishman's national pride, as wounding him in the most sensitive point, is the undeniable fact, that wherever English and American ships are brought into actual competition, the vessels of the latter nation are invariably preferred to those of his own country, and that not from any principle of national bolstering, but by English and American merchants equally.

The whole of the Liverpool and New York trade, which formerly we monopolized, is now almost as entirely confined to America. Not a single "English tub" can get a freight in an American port so long as any American vessel can be procured.

I am afraid there is no denying that, as a nation, the Americans are progressing much more rapidly than ourselves in the science of naval architecture; and in the management of their commerce, in the relative relations between the owners and captain and the owners and crew, and the comparatively greater equalization of profits, which renders every man connected with the vessel anxious for the speedy success of the voyage, the Yankees are making

rapid strides in the right direction, which we should do well to follow.

Although doubtless our social progress and commercial enterprise, compared with that of the other nations of Europe, have been mighty indeed, yet it is no part of true wisdom to attempt to deny the fact, which is undeniable, that there is a nation in the other hemisphere, sprung from a common stock, and endowed with an energy equal to our own, but animated with no great affection for us, which is following so closely on the heels of our progress, that while she has been enabled to avoid many of our errors she has yet reaped all the benefit of our success; and that now, rendered doubly eager by the sense of successful competition, she is trimming her sails to every cat's-paw as well as to every steady breeze of commerce, and drawing up so close under our stern, that unless England gives up the self-flattering but fallacious idea of being so far ahead of the rest of the world as to be beyond all danger of defeat, and buckling to, heart and soul, strains every nerve in the race that is inevitable, she will discover, when too late, that her ships are no longer the swiftest, nor her commerce the most princely and universal the world has ever seen; but she will see the fleets of a younger rival, one that she had almost been considering an "outsider," distancing her in the race of nations; and as history proves, without a single exception, a lead thus lost is never regained!

It is not by vaunting our progress, or encouraging an unfounded self-confidence in our enterprise and our energy, on the one hand, nor by the servile

praise and admiration of any other country, on the other,—not by subtracting from the merit of our institutions, "tinkering them up in the imitation of those of the United States," as some member had the bad taste to remark in the House of Commons—but it is by strengthening them as much as may be, improving them gradually where improvement is necessary and admissible, thus rendering them thereby objects of greater affection to the people:—it is by marking carefully and without national prejudice the strong points of our adversaries at the same time that we endeavour to detect our own short-comings—it is by this means that England,

"That precious stone set in the silver sea,"

will still, *primus inter primos*, hold her place as foremost in the front rank of nations, and will still, as she does now, and will, I firmly believe, continue to do for years to come—rule the waves, not with her ships of war, but with the wealth-bearing fleets of her commerce.

CHAPTER XII.

NEW ORLEANS—EMBARK FOR THE HAVANA.

On joining our vessel towards evening we found every man on board gloriously drunk except the mate, and he was not going to sea with us. The captain was having a pitched battle with the steward, a Spanish lad, whom he was kicking and pushing about the deck with the most drunken perseverance, an amusement he seemed to have been engaged in for some time, judging by the shortness of breath he displayed. As everything seemed in miserable confusion I turned into a berth about five feet long by eighteen inches broad, whereby keeping scuttle and door open I managed to get fresh air enough to exist. On turning out the next morning I found we formed one of a brood of four or five vessels that were being towed down to the ocean by a huge white tug, which was in the midst of us. I clambered on board the steamer to have a chat with the tug-captain, and to see the other vessels. He was the most reckless man I had yet met, and the cool way he talked of "bilers bursting," and men living several hours after they had had every atom of skin scalded off, made me feel quite uncomfortable.

The employment of tugs on the Mississippi is the last dying effort of a steamer on the western waters.

It is calculated they will burst or get snagged in that employ; in fact, one of the two is their only legitimate end, as they are never broken up. Our tug was on its last legs; the engine-boiler was subject to a most unhealthy wheezing, and a spasmodic discharge of steam that was anything but agreeable. She was so unsafe that they could not procure *Irish* to stoke, so had bought a few worn-out old negroes. On board the tug I made acquaintance with some of my fellow-companions. Two were Frenchmen, scowling and unwashed, with a very scanty supply of linen, which was compensated for by a magnificent display of red neckhandkerchiefs. A very few minutes' conversation proved them to be *Rouges déterminés*, admirers of Blanqui and Albert Ouvrier, whom an ungrateful country and General Cavaignac had requested to remain abroad for a short period. We had got into a deep political discussion—in which one *brave homme* had fully proved, to his own satisfaction at all events, that the rights of property were all humbug, and that no man had a right even to the shirt on his own back (I don't believe any one would have coveted *his*) if *le peuple* wanted it—when the first plunge of the vessel on our approach to the bar was felt! *Le brave* looked unutterables, but still went on talking faster and more energetically than ever. I remarked that his sallow complexion became more sallow, and that he was continually casting rather unwholesome glances to the side; but as the motion was so *very* slight, I thought it was only a shudder passing through his patriotic body on thinking of "La pauvre France." I was soon undeceived, for the vessel giving a deeper pitch than usual, the

Frenchman ejaculated, "Ah, mon Dieu! ce maudit mal de mer!" and rushing to the side, "La pauvre France" was soon forgotten.

I did not see him again for two days, myself having been remarkably uncomfortable during that time; when on coming on deck towards evening, feeling rather queer *circa præcordium*, the first person I saw was my friend Le Rouge, leaning against the cabin door, engaged in the reckless attempt of appearing in the enjoyment of a gigantic cigar. Directly he saw me, he sprang forward, but he counted without his host, or rather his tenant,—the sudden movement was too much for him, and dashing down his cigar, and *sacré*-ing as long as his rising emotions would allow him, he was again obliged to take refuge in his coffin-shaped berth.

I saw him no more till the day we arrived off the Havana, when he came on deck in a demi-toilet—(a Frenchman's demi-toilet at sea consists of a coat and inexpressibles, with no superfluous linen of any kind)—looking more utterly miserable than it is possible to conceive. Who would have recognised in the yellow-visaged, unwashed, unshaved, unshirted individual who now made his appearance, the "Rouge Déterminé" of last week—the man who would have reared the cap of liberty on a street barricade, though the bullets were raining about him, and who would have strutted to the guillotine and shed the last drop of his blood for *la gloire*, or his own peculiar ideas of liberty, with as much *insouciance* as if he were going to dinner? "How was the mighty fallen!" The whole outward man was changed—even the blood-red scarf worn so gallantly round his neck, seemed to have become of a pale brickdust colour!

Certainly there is no such settler for political enthusiasm, or unsettler for an unwholesome stomach, as *le mal de mer*. If Hamlet had said, "Seasickness doth make cowards of us all," instead of that little cant about conscience, it would have been quite as true, for it affects all alike, strong and weak, old and rich. No wonder Marc Antony did not feel very pugnacious at the battle of Actium, and took the first opportunity of retiring, when he had been tossing about in an uncomfortable galley for three days and three nights, on a chopping sea, too rough for fighting. Moreover, Marc Antony was a *bon vivant*, and probably his digestives were not in the most sea-worthy condition. No doubt the fate of the world has often been decided by much smaller matters than seasickness.

Nothing can be imagined more agueish and miserable than the banks of the Mississippi below New Orleans; the mud hardly raised half an inch above the water, and covered as far as the eye can reach with brown waving reeds, from six to ten feet high, that rattle with the wind like a field of Brobdignagian corn. At certain seasons of the year, these quaking swamps are thronged with millions of ducks. The pilots for the bar live at a pilot station called Belize, just at the mouth of the river: their huts are raised on poles in the marsh, like the account one reads of the Dyaks in Borneo, and some tribes in Africa. Although they all suffer from ague, coming into the world, as it were, shaking—for it is no uncommon thing to see children of five or six trembling like aspens—yet they live a long time. The Americans say that the French creoles of Louisiana die of ague because they are too lazy to shake: our pilot would

not die of that part of the complaint certainly, for he shook like a man of eighty.

There was a heavy sea on the bar, and a whole gale of wind from the north. The great duck steamer took her brood of ducklings over the bar, and then cast them off, and a pretty hash they made of it. We all got foul of each other, and so entangled that it was some time before we could get clear. We lost our jib-boom, and the others all suffered more or less. Our captain and crew were by this time pretty sober, but most of them considerably damaged about the figure-head; one or two so cut and swelled, that if their faces could have been seen without any part of the body, nobody could have imagined they represented the "human face divine;" they looked more like over-boiled plum-puddings. The crew was composed of Greeks, Chilians, Spaniards, Portuguese, French, German, and a Roman, and the skipper a Hamburgher: not a single American. During the first twenty-four hours, we carried away our fore-topsail yard and tiller, which latter, with a nasty sea, was difficult to remedy.

Monday, 17th February.—Made the port of "El Havana," the Haven, about 10 A.M. Stood in till we could have thrown a biscuit into the Moro, when, just as we were weathering it nicely, the wind veered half a point, and sent us right out to sea again. We made several attempts during that and the following day, but without success. At length, about 4 P.M., on the evening of the second day, we made a last dying struggle, and by shaving the rocks, succeeded in entering.

The entrance to the harbour is very fine. The

gigantic citadels of El Moro and Cabanas crown the heights on each side, frowning ominously over the city, which lies low on the west side of the entrance. The first view of the white houses and closed shutters reminded me of Cadiz. After the health-boats and custom-house officers had paid their visits, we landed, having had some difficulty in retaining possession of our guns and pistols, as the Spaniards were in rather a nervous state of mind, on account of Lopez's threatened invasion.

The Havana is a very busy mercantile city, ten times more so than any I have seen in Old Spain, and it is sometimes quite difficult to thread the narrow streets on account of the number of mule-carts and carriages. The quays and wharfs that line the south end of the harbour are of solid granite, and extend upwards of a mile, covered the whole length with an iron-roofed shed, worthy of a railway terminus in England. It certainly deserves its title of the "Tyre of the West." The streets and houses are painted with the most reckless disregard to any uniformity of colouring, and give one the idea of a painter's easel. The hotels are bad; so is the feeding, except at one little restaurant outside the walls, of which I cherish the most tender recollections, and of whose truffles I ate not a few. Judging from my own experience, I think that people who have never visited the West Indies can form but a very slight idea of the size and magnificence of the capital of the Queen of the Antilles. It is a well-built, tolerably well-drained city, with a population within and without the walls of nearly 180,000, situated round the shores of a magnificent harbour, which

some one has compared to a shamrock, the entrance to it guarded by the two strongest fortifications in the western world, forming the stem. The Havana is unequalled in the world in four respects,—her quays and sheds, the beauty and lightness and coolness of her Opera-house, the Teatro del Tacon, the size and splendour of her ladies' eyes, and the diminutive size of their cigar-smoking lords.

As far as the men are concerned, the *sangre azul* of the Old World would not seem to have been much improved by the slight admixture of the *sangre negro* in the New. The Havana is the land of the fan, but the mantilla is not seen except in the morning; in the evening the ladies wear nothing on their heads, but deck out their hair with flowers.

The Habanera never walks a yard, always going in her volante, a nondescript vehicle, like an exaggerated private cab hung low, suspended between enormous high wheels that reach far above the hood. The motion is very easy, but the weight for the horse frightful. A horse very often has not only to bear the weight of his rider, a gigantic fourteen stone negro, with massive saddle and boots, but about one-third of the weight of the volante itself, to say nothing of the signoras inside. The horses are eight or ten feet from the body of the volante, which gives it a very strange appearance, particularly in the narrow streets of the Havana, when turning a corner suddenly you quite forget the connexion between the horse and man that has just passed you and the vehicle that is approaching.

The streets are very narrow, and the windows open down to the trottoir; they are called windows *lucus a non*——; they are unglazed, and merely consist

of iron bars six or seven inches apart, just wide enough for an enterprising Caballero to get his head through if he has anything particular to whisper in the ear of some fair one within.

The Cuban ladies never dress till after midday; and though "beauty when unadorned is adorned the most," yet a beauty must be perfect indeed, if she looks as fascinating in slippers and curl-papers as she does *en grande toilette*. I think the French women are the only ones who understand the art of *demi-toilette*; and with them it is often very fascinating, and seems to dispense with a good deal of the formality attendant on silks and brocades, and to be really what the Italians call it, *una vestita di confidenza*.

From about four to six the ladies assemble at their windows, dressed in low evening gowns and short camesas, receiving visits from the gentlemen, who generally converse through the bars. It is a very amusing, but dangerous occupation, promenading the streets during these hours, receiving the concentrated rays of many pairs of flashing eyes, which, like the Gorgon's head, rivet one to the spot, but do not *quite* turn one into stone. (By the way, it is a popular error to suppose the Gorgon's head was a monster; on the contrary, it was the very quintessence of beauty,—a lovely face at which the gazer was amazed and fascinated, and which caused his destruction by a far more pleasant sensation than that of fear.) In walking through the streets you see all the little family racas and occupations; and I think the Havana must have originated in Le Sage's mind that scene in the "Diable Boiteux," where Asmodeus the demon places Don Cleopas no

an elevated position, and unroofs the house for his inspection.

The Cuban ladies lead a very indolent, though I fear you cannot always say innocent existence, flirting being by far their most engrossing occupation. Society is on a very easy footing, and the Havana ladies, both married and single, do very much as they please. They drive on the *Paseo del Tacon*, they go to the opera, and to mass several times a day, and flirt everywhere. The Cuban beauty, too, is more expert with the fan than even those at Seville or Granada; they incline to *embonpoint* (the far west ladies would call them "fleshy") even when quite young, a peculiarity which contrasts pleasantly with their rather spare neighbours the Americans.

The beauty of the Cuban dames is that of the maid of Cadiz, under a warmer and more indolent climate than even her native Spain, and partakes more of the characteristics of Dûdû than of Julia. Many of them sing and play well, and all dance gracefully; but, I fancy, more solid knowledge is possessed in a *very* slight degree, and like Lolah, many believe that

> "Europe's an island near
> Morocco, betwixt Egypt and Tangier."

The Cuban men are a most useless, insignificant, do-nothing race, swaggering about, smoking and imbibing a kind of *eau sucré:* they, as well as the ladies, are good singers and dancers, but they prove the truth of the old French proverb:—

> "Qui bien chante, et bien danse,
> Fait un métier qui peu avance:"

although the Russian history of the beginning of the last century, and perhaps our own, might furnish instances where the tripping it on the light fantastic toe with elegance and strength has been a short road to wealth and advancement, both for ladies and gentlemen. There are several ways of killing time at the Havana. Bull-fights, cock-fights, operas at two dollars a-head, and "Il Opera Economico," or the Beggar's Opera, viz. the bands of two or three of the regiments that play every evening opposite the palace. All bull-fights are cruel in the extreme, and only tolerable when first-rate in every respect. I had seen them at Cadiz and Malaga, with Montes as Matador, and "El Chico" as Picador, so did not care to see a bad imitation, with all the cruelty and none of the excitement attendant on a perfect spectacle. The cock-fights are equally disgusting and tiresome, and as well as the bull-fights take place on Sundays.

The opera is really first-rate, and the house, the most beautiful one I have seen in all respects; it holds five or six thousand people, nearly as large as the Queen's Theatre in London. The front of the boxes are open brass-work, and are divided from each other in the same way, which gives the house a wonderfully light appearance. The pit is composed entirely of stalls, and very comfortable ones too. The ladies promenade behind the boxes between the acts, and their lords smoke their cigarettos.

There was a very good corps artistique during the winter 1850, 1851. Mdlles. Steffanoni, Bozzio—the latter not known in Europe, but very good—Salvi, Marini, Bettini, and a very good orchestra, the whole under the direction of Bottesini, the miraculous per-

former on the biggest of all big fiddles, one of the most extraordinary instrumentalists since the days of Paganini. A Cuban audience is the most enthusiastic I ever saw, applauding and encoring in the most reckless manner. They throw pigeons decked with ribbons without end on the stage to their favourites, and as most of the pigeons have doubloons tied under their wings, the attention is appreciated. It used to be a great amusement, sitting in the boxes and watching the swells in the stalls, with their baskets full of pigeons. I have seen as many as twenty or thirty on the stage at once. One night I was very much amused with watching the manœuvres of two young dandies; they were sitting quite close to the orchestra, and had a great basket between them, of which they seemed to take particular care; the lid was continually rising and falling in a most remarkable manner, and the whole basket seemed every now and then to be convulsed with throes of violent agitation. I wondered what it could contain, not supposing pigeons were strong enough to agitate the whole basket, or that they could have enough to fill a hamper. At length, after some wonderful pirouetting on the toe from an active wiry old lady who was dancing, my attention was suddenly attracted by a great commotion in the neighbourhood of my two friends below: both were on the floor, and I thought at first they were fighting; they were both struggling violently with the hamper, which seemed in a most strange state of internal convulsion, when at length what was my astonishment to see a huge peacock extracted with great difficulty from the hamper, and then launched forth, flapping and screaming, towards

the stage; either the bird was nervous at thus appearing suddenly before a crowded house, or else it must have carried a great weight of doubloons, for instead of reaching the stage, where I suppose it was intended to expand its tail, and strut about emblematical of the grace of the lady that was dancing, the original motion imparted to it when launched into space ceased short of the foot-lights, and it fell in the centre of the orchestra, nearly driving the French horn down a stout musician's throat who was puffing a solo, and half smothering the big fiddle who was playing the accompaniment; this of course stopped the performance for some time, and drew the attention of the house on the owners of the peacock; they at first seemed rather proud of their performance, but on the big fiddle jumping up from his prostrate position, and shaking his bow at the authors of his discomforture, amidst the roar of laughter of the whole house, they began to look rather sheepish.

The ladies dress very becomingly at the opera, and seem to enjoy the performance thoroughly. However, flirting, as I before remarked, seems their chief occupation; and the flights of Cupid's arrows, shot from eyes which any of Byron's similes of "the gazelle," "the jewel of Giamschid," and "Oh that eye," &c. and numberless others would describe with equal truth (though I think Homer's epithet for Juno, "ox-eyed," describes the Cuban eye more correctly), and wafted across the theatre, by

> "The wanton motions of the breezy fan,"

that

> "Gives coolness to the matchless dame,—
> To every other heart a flame,"

to their destination in the bosom of some diminutive specimen of the Cuban race, whose good fortune in being the object of so many gracious looks makes you almost as bilious-looking as himself with envy and spleen, are very trying to the patience of the inexperienced stranger; and with true British humility you wonder how the ladies can possibly look at such insignificant, bilious foreigners, with "half a heart and little more than half a liver," when there are so many of your own countrymen, yourself amongst the number, present. Although, as I said before, the considerable amount of African blood engrafted on the original Spanish stock has by no means improved the Cuban men, yet with the ladies, who are altogether a much finer race of beings, it is otherwise. The beauty of the Havana, at the time of my visit, was a young lady who displayed rather more of Afric's warm blood in her eye and figure than is usual, so much so, that in America she would not have been admitted into society. The men have that peculiarly bilious complexion which one remarks in a person just recovering from an attack of jaundice; and Laura's not very flattering observation to Beppo,

> "Bless me! did I ever! no I never
> Saw a fellow look so yellow,—how 's your liver?"

was continually recurring to my mind.

The society at the Havana is very agreeable, and on an easy footing. I chanced to be there during the Carnival, and was at balls, tertullias, masquerades, and concerts every night; some of the latter were very good. Salvi, Steffanoni, and Bottesini, formed no despicable talent for a private concert. The waltz is a popular dance, but the polka is scarcely ever

seen; the most popular one is a slow, graceful, swimming *contre danse*, with very ugly music. I do not remember to have seen so many ladies smoke at the Havana as I did in Old Spain; certainly it is not done so publicly; the gentlemen do not actually smoke in the dancing and drawing rooms, but they do in the vestibules, supper and ante-rooms.

The Havana is, *par excellence*, the paradise of smokers; the climate and the mode of life both induce a desire for the fragrant weed; and then, such tobacco! I think nobody who has not smoked a cigar just made of the best tobacco can have an idea of what a really perfect cigar is. In England we never see the tobacco that is smoked by the luxurious creoles of the Havana. The retail shops which, by paying high, get the pick of the market, select a certain number of the best leaves, which they roll up and sell to their regular customers every day, as they are rolled. They are roughly made, and probably would not sell in England. A regular smoker will consume, perhaps, twenty or thirty a-day, but they are all fresh: what we call a fine old cigar, a Cuban would not smoke. He either buys them day by day, as they are made, or else he buys a good batch when he gets a chance, and keeps them in air-tight packets of twelve, or twenty, or whatever his daily consumption may be, so consuming one packet every day. The best cigar I ever smoked before or since was one given me by Baron Rothschild's agent, at a party at his house; it was a rough pressed one, called a "vecquero," and was made of one leaf, with no wrapper. Certainly a cigar is the most fascinating shape for the consumption of tobacco. As Byron says:—

"Sublime tobacco,

* * * *

Magnificent in Stamboul, but less grand,
Though not less loved, in Wapping or the Strand.
Divine in hookahs, glorious in a pipe,
When tipp'd with amber, mellow, rich, and ripe.
Yet thy true lovers more admire by far
Thy naked beauties—give me a cigar!"

The best tobacco is only grown in a very small district, called the Vuelta de Abajo, on the north side of the island; it is a very variable crop, and the qualities and flavour of different seasons vary as much as the vintages of Burgundy. The season of 1851 produced the most abundant and finest flavoured crop that has been known in the island for some time. "Though, undoubtedly, the best tobacco is grown in the island of Cuba, and the best cigars made at the Havana, yet such is the demand at present in Europe for the real Havanas, that all the sickly plants and damaged leaves that formerly were thrown aside are now manufactured, and I have bought cigars there quite as bad as any British cabbage that one could buy for a halfpenny in an English pot-house: moreover, a great quantity of tobacco is imported into the Havana from Virginia, and manufactured there, and as twice the number of cigars are exported than the island produces tobacco enough to manufacture, it follows, that (omitting the great number smoked in Cuba itself, which are all genuine,) at least one-half of the cigars sold in Europe as real Havanas, and which do actually come from thence, are made of American tobacco, which, being packed in cases, goes through the same process as the tobacco of which our connoisseurs

profess such a contempt when made into our British cigars. In London or Liverpool there is only one reason why the British manufactured cigar should not be as good as the same tobacco manufactured where it is grown, namely, that from being tightly packed in casks, it has to be soaked before it can be rendered soft enough to be rolled into a smokable shape, and this is supposed to affect its flavour; but I think there is a great deal of imagination and fancy on the subject. I am not sure that, if I were offered an average Havana, and a good British cigar, I should select the former.

I went continually to the cigar manufacturers during my stay at the Havana: fifty or perhaps a hundred men are seated at long tables under sheds, each with a heap of rough tobacco leaves before him, and by his side a few finer leaves that have been picked out, moistened and ironed; these are what they call wrappers, and upon the fineness of the wrapper, its colour and freedom from fibres or veins, and not upon the quality of the interior tobacco, depends the appearance and value of the cigar in the European market. The workman takes a number of leaves from the rough heap—instinct seems to direct him how many—and with two or three rolls between the palms of his hands and the table, forms them into the shape and size required: he then lays the wrapper on the table, and with one roll finishes the cigar, all except the end, which he twiddles round to a point in about a second. This is the most difficult part of the business, and it is very seldom that one sees a very good point: there is only one man who they say can make a perfect one, and he is employed

by Cabañas; his wages are very high. The cigars made out of the same tobacco are given to different men, who sort them into three equal batches, Primeras, Segundas, Terçeras, or first, second, and third qualities, and in this they are guided entirely of course by the neatness of the rolling, or the fineness and colour of the wrapper. The price of ordinary-sized cigars for the London market would be, Primera, 25 dollars, 5*l.* per thousand; second quality, 18 dollars, or about 3*l.* 10*s.* per thousand; third quality, 15 dollars, about 3*l.* per thousand; now the third quality is just exactly the same tobacco as the other two; it is only the outside wrapper that is at all inferior, the advantage of this being of a fine texture is, that it burns truer. Those for high-priced regalias for the London market, which are as high as from 120 to 200 dollars per thousand, are selected with great care as regards colour, texture, and freedom from veins and fibres. I went to see a case of some thousands that were going home to the Great Exhibition; they were manufactured by Patagras, one of the first manufacturers; they were selected with the greatest care, and most beautifully made of all shapes and sizes, by different wooden models. They had cost the manufacturers from three to four hundred dollars a thousand, but barring the wrappers, the tobacco was no better than that which was used for much cheaper ones. The pale cigars one sees with white specks in them, have a wrapper made of the outside leaf of the tobacco plant, which being nearest the ground, has been blanched by the moisture and the sun, and lost a good deal of its flavour. The plant itself rather resembles a cabbage.

CHAPTER XIII.

SLAVES—GUINES—PALM-TREES—WINDS—MOONLIGHT—BUCCANEERS.

ALTHOUGH Spain professes to punish the importation of slaves with very heavy penalties, yet *sub rosâ* they have till within the last three years been introduced to the tune of ten thousand per annum. The Governor Generals used to receive three doubloons, or 9*l.* a-head for every slave landed—a pleasant little yearly sum, which they were not very likely to relinquish without a struggle; however, the present Governor General, Manuel de la Concha, has set his face against it and refused bribes, and declared his intention of hanging up the first man he discovers importing slaves. Whether he really means what he says, or whether it is a sop thrown to the British Government, which has of late been rather imperative and urgent in their demands about the admission of slaves, I cannot say, but as they are still imported in small numbers, there is no doubt that, if he is in earnest, he need not wait long for a hanging bout. A schooner was pointed out to me one day that came into the harbour full of niggers, driven in by stress of weather. The English slave commissioners of course made inquiries, and were

told that she had only come from another Cuban port, and that these slaves belonged to a planter who was changing his location; this was all the information or satisfaction they could get; but there is little doubt that she was straight from the coast of Africa, and had only put into some Cuban port to get her papers altered, to enable her to come straight on to the Havana, where she could land her cargo with greater ease, and get a better price for them. If an English man of war had been there at the time, she would have been warranted in seizing her, and doubtless would have done so. There was a case some three years back, where the crew of a slaver that had been captured, and was on its way to Fernando Po to be condemned, rose against the prize crew, and murdered every soul on board, a midshipman and twelve men. The vessel was never retaken, and the captain of her was pointed out to me several times at the Havana, where he was swaggering about, apparently rather a notoriety than otherwise. He had run several cargoes since, and when I was there was said to have just landed four hundred slaves within a very few miles of the Havana. He was a desperate looking villain.

The mixed slave commission of English and Spanish appointed by treaty between the two Governments, and for which the English Government pays 1,500*l.* a-year, is a perfect humbug. It is notorious that the importation of slaves has, till within the last three years, been at the rate of ten or twelve thousand; only sixty have been brought forward for adjudication. The commissioners get very handsome salaries, and, by all accounts, do rather less than

nothing for them; their more than *insouciance* in the matter is always a convenient cloak for the Spanish Government to throw over their toleration of the trade, for say they, "If the English commissioner is satisfied, of course we are." An unanswerable response to all representations of our Government.

Slaves are cheaper in Cuba than in the States: very good labourers can be bought for from two to three hundred dollars; household servants of course vary according to their capabilities; the men for driving the carriages are valued according to their size, and a very big, very black negro is worth a good round number of doubloons. Although the actual treatment of the slaves in Cuba, especially on the sugar estates, is worse than in the southern States of America, yet their social position is much higher. In the first place, in Cuba a master can manumit a slave directly he chooses, without any legal difficulties, and a slave, if badly treated, has a chance of improving his condition, being enabled by law to compel his mater to sell him at the price he gave for him. They are allowed to be instructed in their Bible, and are not kicked out of the cathedrals and churches like so many dogs, as is the case in America; they are also allowed to be buried in the same soil as their fellow-whites.

The slaves in the immediate neighbourhood of the Havana are chiefly Koromantyn negroes from the Gold Coast, distinguished from all other negroes by their strength and endurance, and the ferocity of their dispositions. This is joined to a courage and stubbornness which, during some of the negro riots, has enabled them to meet death and endure the

most frightful tortures with fortitude and apparent indifference. I have read an account in some book of two negroes of this race, who, after committing untold atrocities during the negro riots in Jamaica, some time in the last century, were sentenced to be suspended in chains from a gibbet erected in the town. They remained in that state seven days! chatting and joking with each other, and with their fellow-blacks who came to visit them. Neither of them was heard to utter the slightest complaint, except of cold at night. The master of one of them having visited them on the seventh day, they both had a hearty laugh at his expense. On that day one died without a groan, and on the next his companion died also. I doubt whether any of the martyrs, voluntary or involuntary, supported by all the enthusiasm of a just and holy cause, and cheered by the stedfast hope of a sure reward in a future state, have ever shown more enduring fortitude and determination than did these two heathens. The Koromantyn negroes can always be distinguished from all others by the way in which they slash and tattoo their faces. It is done whilst quite small children, and their skin is so thick and *bark-like*, that, like a cut in a young tree, the wound keeps increasing in breadth and depth with the growth of the negro.

When Lopez's invasion was first mooted, and the Creole population affected to sympathise, the Governor-General gave the whole of the slave population within ten miles of the Havana three days' holiday, that the whites might be able to form some idea of their numbers, strength, and ferocity, and take a wholesome warning against favouring any agitation

which might bring about the horrors of a slave rising. It is said that the sight of these fifty or sixty thousand African warriors swaggering through the streets, and the knowledge that the same struggle which liberated them from the Spanish rule might also liberate the blacks from theirs, did more to quench the rising feeling in favour of "Libertad" amongst the Creoles than any dread of the soldiers of old Spain. It was a ticklish proceeding on the part of the Governor-General, and would have been scarcely warranted but for the presence of twenty thousand men under arms the whole time, and the possibility of the slaves procuring arms being strictly guarded against.

The prosperity of the Island of Cuba, and the energy of its population, composed chiefly of a race that in all other parts of the world have proved themselves, during the two last centuries at least, the most useless and stand-still of modern nations, is far beyond any comparison with the prosperity or energy visible in the other West India islands, although inhabited by races of originally far more plodding and enterprising natures. Of course, a great proportion of this remarkable difference is to be attributed to the maintenance of *cheap* slave labour in the former case, and the difficulty of procuring any whatsoever in the latter; but still the Spanish character in Cuba seems in a great degree to have lost that retrospective sloth which has latterly been its distinguishing feature, and to have recovered a good deal of that enterprising and speculative spirit which, some three hundred years since, made its merchants and commerce the envy of the world. In addition to the splendid quays and wharfs which

I have before mentioned, and which would do credit to the most wealthy capital in Europe, the Creoles of Cuba, scorning the anti-improving spirit of the inhabitants of old Spain, who seem to consider it of more consequence to spend time than to save it, and who view with horror any of the innovations of this progressive age, seize upon every new adaptation of steam and improved machinery for the manufacture of sugar with the greatest eagerness; and the introduction of any improvement on one estate is speedily followed by its adoption over the whole island; and risk and expense are disregarded in real Yankee style, when the objects to be gained are a saving of time and an increased production. Amongst other improvements, railroads are fast spreading over the island; they are well constructed, and the carriages easy and strongly built, and the speed averages between twenty and thirty miles an hour.

During my stay at the Havana, I went by rail to Guines, a small town some seventy miles distant, and much visited by foreigners, as lying close to the best cultivated sugar estate on the island. It was the first trip I had made across a perfectly tropical country, and my glowing anticipations of the luxuriance and beauty of the vegetation were by no means disappointed. It was a strange sensation, whisking along at the rate of twenty or thirty miles an hour, between hedges of flowering aloes and groves of stately palm and cocoa-nut trees.

The Royal Palm, or as it is less elegantly termed, the Mountain-cabbage, which is thickly spread over the Island of Cuba, and occasionally grows to the enormous height of one hundred and fifty feet, is without doubt the most graceful and majestic, as it is

also the most useful, of all the tropical creation. The graceful pinnated foliage that springs from the summit, constituting, as it were, the Corinthian capital of the majestic column that forms the trunk, and expanding into wide-spreading, drooping branches, closely but beautifully arranged, forms a verdant canopy,—

"A pillar'd shade,
High overarch'd, and echoing paths between,"

Nature's parasol, as it were, to protect man and beast, and the fruits of the soil, from the destructive blaze of the scorching midday sun, which it does without impeding the circulation of the balmy breezes which rustle underneath.

The early discoverers were particularly struck with the beauty and elegance of the palm, and the many uses to which it was adapted by the natives: Sir W. Raleigh, when enlarging on the excessive fertility of Guiana and the value of its productions, says,—"This tree alone giveth to man whatever he can desire at Nature's hand." The Royal Palm is to the inhabitants of the West India Islands exactly what the date-tree was, and is, to the Arabs of the desert. Deborah administered judgment to the people of Israel, "sitting under a palm-tree between Bethel and Ramah" (Judges iv. 5); and probably the primitive justice of the aboriginal inhabitants of the tropical islands was administered by the caciques under the same shade. There is no doubt that the palm-tree originated the idea of the Corinthian column and capital. In the vision of the prophet Ezekiel (Ezek. xl. 16), when the architectural beauties of the temple that was to be at Jerusalem are enumerated, several posts are mentioned, and it is said that "upon each post was a palm-tree,"—

these are supposed to have been pilasters representing palm-trees, the trunk forming the shaft, and the branches the capital. I suppose originally the Chinese borrowed their idea of the umbrella from the palm. Many old green Chinese umbrellas I have seen, seem to have been copied from one.

The Bamboo, which may be called "nature's fan," opening and shutting its graceful fan-shaped leaves, and wafting the "spicy odours" of the pomegranate and the cinnamon through the heavy-laden murky atmosphere of a tropical midday, renders it even a more delicious companion than the palm. It is the most elegant of all the tropical Flora, except perhaps the tree-fern of South America; but its neighbourhood is not always safe, as the most poisonous snakes frequently conceal themselves amongst its knotted and tangled roots.

The Ceiba, or silk-cotton-tree, is one of the largest trees in the world; and some that I saw in Cuba and down south quite reminded me of the Brobdignagian descriptions of Gulliver. A single trunk of this tree hollowed out as a canoe has been known to contain fifty persons. The West Indies, equally with the East, have their Banyan-tree, namely, the wild fig-tree, which spreads and throws out its supports in a marvellous manner; and I was told of one small island, called Mona, I think, the leeward side of which was entirely covered with one tree of this species.

But, however greatly I admired the splendid forms and the gorgeous beauty of the flowers and foliage of the tropics, I was excessively disappointed in the fruits, finding none at all equal in flavour to our British productions. The pineapple, that fruit which

James I. said was too delicious for any *subject* to eat, is "far away" the best.

Nothing can exceed the charm and beauty of a moonlight night in the tropics. The delicious coolness of the atmosphere after the oppressive heat of the day; the perfect stillness which reigns everywhere; the soft pale light of a moon which casts a shadow scarcely less brilliant or less clearly defined than does our summer's sun in England; the sea itself trembling with silver light; the soft warm breeze murmuring among the leaves of the cocoa and the palm, as though nature sighed in her repose—(not my own simile, I believe)—all combine to render the hours between nine and twelve the most enjoyable it is possible to conceive. The "Opera Economico," or regimental band, used to play every evening from nine till twelve, in the square before the government-house, called the Plaza d'Armas; the square itself was usually thronged with ladies and gentlemen sauntering along, or sitting under the palms and bananas listening to the music; while the road surrounding it was filled with *volantes* with their lovely occupants in evening costume, their black hair usually ornamented with a single crimson or white flower, making the most of those matchless eyes and speaking fans, which only the Habanera knows how to manœuvre to perfection; and I used to fancy that lounging in a comfortable chair, smoking a real Vecquero, and gazing alternately at the bright stars and at the ladies' eyes, almost as bright, was as fascinating a *dolce-far-niente* as one could well imagine. The stars are most magnificent in the tropics. At the Havana I saw the Southern Cross for

the first time: it was very low and not very distinct certainly, and I thought our northern constellation, the Ursa Major, who was much higher up and much brighter, rather seemed to lord it over his southern *vis-à-vis*. I saw the Cross afterwards in much greater perfection near the Line, but I can hardly fancy it being finer than the Big Bear. As regards the size and brilliancy of its stars, Orion is a much finer constellation. The planet Venus is so bright that I have seen her cast a shadow, and she gives one the idea of being a shy young modest moon, the moon's eldest daughter just coming out.

The West Indies would be scarcely habitable at some periods of the year, were it not for the constant land and sea breezes which blow by night and by day, independently of the trade wind which blows all the year round. These breezes exist in nearly all the islands, particularly in the high mountainous ones, such as Jamaica, Cuba, Trinidad, &c. The sea breeze blows during the day, the land breeze at night. The cause of these constant alternations was not discovered for some time, but has since been explained a hundred times. The land getting excessively heated after the sun has been up some hours, the air becomes heated also, and expanding, ascends the mountains; while, on the great principle of nature abhorring a vacuum, the sea breeze being cooler, and consequently more dense and lower, flows in to supply its place. This sea breeze commences about 10 A.M., and increases gradually till it blows a very stiff breeze at 3 or 4 P.M., when it as gradually dies away: there is then a calm till about 9 or 10, when the earth getting cooled, the

warm air that had ascended the mountains during the heat of the day, and got condensed on the higher elevations till it had become heavier than the sea air, rolls down the mountain sides to the sea, thus forming, with a few hours' interregnum, alternate sea and land breezes. The sea breeze is very healthy and refreshing, but the land breeze, although much cooler, is often very dangerous, particularly in Jamaica, where it is almost certain fever to sleep with your windows open towards the land, and the land breeze, which has probably crossed miles of swamps and got saturated with miasma, playing upon you.

In Barbadoes and most of the small islands to windward, the sea breeze blows by night as well as by day; this is also the case in the larger islands during the heat of summer, the land at that time being heated to such a degree that the air of the mountains is not sufficiently dense to check the current which flows from the sea: this accounts for the greater healthiness of some of the low islands. The north-east trade, a gentle three and four knot breeze, flows almost without cessation throughout the year. This is caused by much the same causes which regulate the land and sea breezes.

The portion of the globe between the tropics being much hotter than any other part, and the air becoming rarefied, it ascends, and the winds from the poles flow gradually in to supply its place. The air near the equator, when rarefied, blows back over the lower strata of colder air towards the poles, there to be again condensed, and form another trade wind. Thus there are two currents of air continually in motion in each hemisphere, an upper and a lower

one; two flowing from the poles to the equator, and two from the equator to the poles. If the earth did not rotate on its axis, or if the rate of the rotatory motion of the surface were the same at the poles as at the equator, the direction of the lower currents of air, or trade winds, would, in the northern hemisphere, flow directly from north to south, and in the southern hemisphere, from south to north, and the upper stratas would flow due north and south from the equator.

The reason of the deflection of the lower strata from north and south winds to north-east and south-east winds, was not discovered for some time. But when once discovered, it is very easy to understand, and people affect to wonder how there could have been any difficulty in accounting for so simple a phenomenon. No one now-a-days thinks anything of Pythagoras for having discovered that Hesperos and Lucifer, "Son of the Morning," were one and the same planet; such a fact is now considered self-evident; neither does any one think much of Halley's discovery of the cause of the deflection of the trade winds; but still the discoverers of these things do not deserve the less credit on that account. The reason is this: the earth rotates from west to east, and the atmosphere, to the height, it is supposed, of about forty miles, rotates with it, and partakes of its velocity; yet the surface of the globe at the poles does not evidently rotate so quickly as the earth's surface at the equator; consequently, the cold air, in its course from the poles to the equator, passes gradually from a region of comparatively slow rotatory motion to one of considerably greater velocity, and

being unable to maintain its direct course through the regions of continuously accelerating motion, through which it has to pass in its course to the equator, it gets deflected towards the west in proportion as it does not keep pace with the surrounding atmosphere towards the east. As the lower currents, by this means, become north-east and south-east in the northern and southern hemispheres respectively, so the upper strata, from exactly the opposite reason, namely, proceeding from a region of faster to one of slower motion, instead of retaining their original direction of north and south, become north-west and south-west. These cool winds from the poles would naturally continue their course right up to the equator, were it not that they become so heated and rarefied that they ascend before they reach it: consequently, between the parallels of 8° north and 3° south is what is called the "region of calms," in which there would be a perfect calm, but for the great evaporation, which causes constant rain and squalls. To Columbus and his companions, the steady and unwavering trade wind, then experienced for the first time, appeared under very different aspects. The enthusiastic and undaunted mind of the former hailed it as a favouring breeze sent by Heaven to waft him to glory and the haven of his hopes; his companions, on the contrary, were filled with terror and dismay, for to them it seemed to destroy all hopes of return to their native land.

There is a curious custom at the Havana, of laying out bodies in state during the night before burial. They are placed close to the open window fronting the street, on a couch raised four or five feet from

the ground. The corpse is surrounded with high wax tapers, and the whole room illuminated. Frequently, when returning from a *tertulia* or a ball, I have been startled by seeing the fixed and rigid features of some old gentleman or lady, dressed in their best attire, and apparently reclining before the window. It used to appear an unnecessary mockery of death, dressing out a corpse in a new suit of clothes, with tight patent leather boots and white neckcloth. I remember one night in particular, I was returning home through one of the bye streets, when, seeing the lower windows of a house illuminated, and concluding there was a body lying in state, I went towards it. There, close to the window, so close that I could have touched it through the bars, lay the body of a young girl about fifteen years of age. She was dressed as for a ball, with flowers in her hair, and white satin shoes on her feet; her hands crossed on her breast, her eyes closed, and her mouth slightly opened; and altogether her face and expression was one of the most beautiful I have ever seen. "The mild angelic air, the rapture of repose," was there; and the longer I gazed, with a kind of fascination, upon that pure and lovely countenance, the more difficult did I find it to persuade myself that the form before me was but the frail deserted tenement of a spirit that had returned to Him who gave it, and that ere many hours had elapsed, even before decay's effacing fingers had swept those lines where Beauty still lingered, as though the spoiler, Death, was loth to set his seal upon aught so fair, it would be consigned to its long home, to the darkness and silence of the noisome grave. For many days the meekness and

beauty of that face left an impression—almost a pleasing one—upon my mind. A man in black, an undertaker, probably, was sleeping in a corner of the room, and through an open door beyond, I could see half-a-dozen men drinking and playing at dominoes: the memory of the dead was forgotten, and I turned away from the painful contrast. You frequently meet the corpses of little children on their way to burial, lying on an open bier, and decked out like waxen dolls in all their little finery of tinsel and artificial flowers.

During the time that I was at the Havana, there was a continual influx of Americans going to and returning from California, by the steamers which ran between Chagres, Charleston, and New York, calling at the Havana *en route*. Nothing can be more striking than the difference in the tastes and habits of the two nations. The Americans, particularly those returning from California, used to swagger into the *cafés* and *restaurants*, where they drank raw brandy and devoured pounds of ice, as if for a wager. When smoking, they chew one end of the cigar whilst they smoke the other, apparently in frantic haste, almost reminding one of a schoolboy who smokes a cigar under the playground wall, consuming it as fast as he can for fear of being disturbed by the usher, and labours under the deluded idea that he enjoys it. The Creole, on the other hand, seems as if he had no object in the world to hurry him; he never drinks spirits, but deliberately laps up his ice, *eau sucré*, or lemonade, and then lighting a cigarilla, inhales and lingers over it as if it were an enjoyment of a great deal too much importance to be hurried over with

undue haste. The idea once entertained by the Creole population, of annexation with America, was the most suicidal one that could have entered their minds. The indolent, opera and cigar-loving Creole would not stand in competition five years with the energetic, enterprising, go-ahead American: they would disappear from the country, at least from the possession of it, almost as quickly as the aboriginal inhabitants did before their ancestors; and in a very few years, like the French Creoles in Louisiana, their name would hardly be known in the land. However, I believe that if by any untoward course of events they were forced to repudiate their natural (they say she is an *unnatural*) mother, Spain, there is no doubt that they would prefer throwing themselves under the rapacious claws and beak of the great American eagle, (which sometimes takes so high a flight that you can't see him,) and trust to that "glorious respect for international property" which would ensure the holding of their live stock, rather than trust to the abolitional propensities of the slave-hating British lion. In either case they would go to the wall, and I think they are beginning to discover this.

During the last week of the Carnival there were masked balls at the Teatro del Tacon nearly every night; they were crowded; the pit, stage, and background were boarded over; and I think I must have seen as many as 10,000 persons collected there at once. Some of the dances after midnight were of the most remarkable description. I have seen the Gitana dances in Spain, and the two-sous *réunions* outside the Barrières at Paris, but the dancing at the Havana eclipses them all. If any of my readers

have been present at one of these *réunions* on the night of Mardi Gras, they can form some faint, but very faint idea of the character of a dance called Las Bravas; if they have not, any description would fail to give an idea of it.

The cathedral at the Havana is the only building of any note besides the theatre. It is rather a diminutive time-worn building, very much in the style of Samuel Prout; indeed the Havana, with its narrow streets and high houses, would furnish his pencil with as many subjects as Venice with her palaces and canals. In a niche between the columns on the right of the high altar of the cathedral, are deposited, in an upright position above-ground, the remains of Christopher Colon. There is nothing to mark the last earthly resting-place of the mighty dead, whose energy and enthusiastic determination, and whose mind, "*mens equa in arduis*," opened out to Spain a New World, save a small tablet with a long Latin inscription. His name, indeed, will never die, nor does it require wood and stone to perpetuate his deeds, when a whole world is the monument of his greatness; but it certainly does not say much for the gratitude of the sovereign he served, or of the country he enriched, that they have neglected to raise some suitable memorial to so great a genius; and one can scarcely wonder at the small number of distinguished men that Spain has latterly produced, when one considers that the heroes of her golden age, Ximenes and Cordova, Cortes and Columbus, died in disgrace and comparative poverty.

Columbus died of gout, 20th May, 1506; and it is well known that he was first interred at Valladolid,

from whence, agreeably to his own expressed desire, his body was removed to the city of St. Domingo, which he had founded. There it remained until the Spanish part of that island was ceded to France, when, rather from motives of superstition than sentiments of respect, it was taken to the Havana, and deposited as I have stated.

Cuba, the Queen of the Antilles, *la joya mas hermosa en la corona d'Espagna* (the most splendid jewel in the Spanish crown), was discovered by Columbus, in his first voyage, and christened by him Juana, in honour of his sovereign's daughter, but it has since resumed its Indian name of Cuba. It is about 700 miles in length, and averages 70 in breadth; and from its size, Columbus fondly hoped that it was that land of Cathay he was in search of. It was not known till ten years afterwards that it was an island, when it was circumnavigated by Ocampo in 1503; and three years later it was completely conquered by 300 Spaniards under Velasquez. The Havana was built some time in the beginning of the sixteenth century. It was taken and pillaged, about 1660, by Captain Sir Henry Morgan, the most renowned of all the English buccaneers, but was ransomed by the Spaniards. In 1761, General Lord Albemarle took it, after a long siege and heavy losses, chiefly from climate; and it was hardly taken before it was exchanged for the Floridas—"a change for the worse," as the man said when he had got two bad shillings and a doubtful sixpence for a good half-crown: Cuba is about the most valuable, Florida the most useless tract in creation.

The origin of the name Antilles is rather

remarkable:—For some time prior to the discovery of the New World, in fact even from the earliest ages, before it was known that the world was round, philosophers had declared that there must be some new land somewhere in the West, to balance the old continent already known in the East. These imaginary lands they termed Ante Insulæ, or Antinsulæ, implying islands opposite to the known continent. Hence in some of the Venetian maps of the early part of the 15th century, two large islands are inserted in the West, beyond the Azores, Canaries, or Madeira. The largest, the Ysola de Antillia, is about 150 miles long and 50 broad. Further to the north-west is placed another fabulous island, called Delaman Satanaxio, or Satan's own hand. The latter not very elegantly named island was never discovered; and the name of the first was by the French and Caribs changed into Antilles. Beyond these islands again was supposed to lay the country of Tipango, or Japan of Marco Polo; it was this island that Columbus supposed he had reached when he landed on Cat Island; he had no idea of discovering a *new* continent, which most people fancy was his aim, but was only seeking a shorter route to the old.

The Island of Cuba has always been famous for its pirates, slavers, and buccaneers. The keys on the south side of the island, called the Isle of Pines, the Queen's Gardens, the Queen's Little Garden, the Manginilla Keys, and numerous others, form a complete defensive network to the coast, which renders it impossible for any vessels, not thoroughly acquainted with all the numberless shoals and pas-

sages, to approach. It is only within the last few years that piracy has entirely disappeared from the West Indies. During the last American war, a famous pirate, whose name I forget, was pardoned by the American Government, and commanded some privateer boats, which did good service against us at the siege of New Orleans.

The last case of piracy happened about five years ago:—An English brig, becalmed under Cape Antonio, was attacked by a boat-load of Mulattoes and Spaniards, and all the crew murdered except one man, who escaped as by a miracle, swimming or drifting with a plank till he was picked up by a Spanish brig. The captain, on hearing his story, behaved with extraordinary coolness and determination. He went to the place where he supposed the pirates were, and landing alone, he joined them as they were sharing the booty of the captured vessel; they seized him and were about to put him to death, when he told them that that would be a very foolish proceeding, for that he could "put them up to a good thing." He then said, that he had run away from a vessel that was anchored close by; and he offered, if they would trust him, to take them on board, and that she would be an easy prize. He had previously given directions to the men on board his vessel, that when they saw a boat coming off, they were to arm themselves in the best way they could, and concealing themselves, to make a rush upon the pirates, to kill and secure as many as they could; but that if he did not come off before midnight, they were to make the best of their way to the Havana and give information. His description

of the wealth of the vessel, and the certainty of an easy capture, inflamed the cupidity of the pirates, and under his guidance they started for the vessel some short time before midnight. They had no sooner set foot on board, than they were attacked tooth and nail by the crew and their pretended friend, and were all either killed or taken prisoners. The survivors were taken to the Havana and garroted.

The captain received immense Kudos; he was made Captain of the Port of the Havana on the spot, a lucrative employment which he still holds; promoted to the rank of lieutenant in the Spanish navy; and our Queen, through the British Consul, presented him with a gold medal bearing her likeness, adorned with which he used to strut about the Paseo del Tacon, the envy and admiration of all beholders.

The keys and islands on the southern side of Cuba, which I have already named, were the favourite resorts of the world-renowned buccaneers, or rather boucaniers. The rise of these famous freebooters, and the origin of their name, is worth recounting. Even as early as the end of the 16th century, the mighty monarchy of Spain, through the destructive effects of her bigotted and avaricious policy, had already acquired a good speed in the downward course which she has pursued with such undeviating accuracy for the last three hundred years; and was at that time totally incapable of supplying her growing colonies in the West with those commodities and luxuries which their increasing wealth rendered necessary. The consequence was, that smugglers of other nations, English, French, and Dutch, carried

on a lucrative trade by supplying the deficiency. These smugglers, encouraged by the Spanish settlers themselves, and urged on by the temptation of enormous profit, became more and more daring and powerful; and from at first trying to avoid the *guarda costas*, or preventive vessels, they began to treat them with great contempt, beating them off whenever they made their appearance, and after some time even seeking for them and capturing them for the purpose of supplying themselves with better vessels.

It appears that towards the beginning of the 17th century, most of the mines and plantations of Cuba and St. Domingo were abandoned for the more lucrative ones of Mexico. The deserted tracts in these immense islands, deprived of their original inhabitants and deserted by their conquerors, were soon swarming with herds of cattle introduced by the Spaniards. The introduction of cattle into the New World is one of the few benefits that Spain has imparted to any of her colonies. Wherever she conquered, there she landed either oxen or horses; before the Spanish conquest, not one was known in the plains and pampas of South America, where now they roam in countless millions. The bees also, which now exist in numbers from one extreme of the continent to the other, are identical with the European bees, and are supposed to have been introduced by the Spaniards. The only species of ox that is supposed to be indigenous to the American continent, is the Bos Americanus, or Bison; and that bears more resemblance to some of the species of Northern Asia than to those of Europe.

But to return to the smugglers. They soon discovered that it was a profitable employment to hunt these herds of cattle for their hides and tallow; and they every now and then adopted the hunter's life, both for amusement and profit. The first of these hunters were Frenchmen. Exquemelin, a Dutch buccaneer, the great authority on the subject, and who wrote the history of his brotherhood, says that the name *boucanier* was derived from a Carib word, *boucan*, applied to smoked meat and the tent where it was dried. But when one comes to consider that *boucan* is the French for smoke, and *boucaner* signifies to smoke dry, it seems much more probable that *boucanier* is a French word. As they became more numerous, and the cattle less so, they gradually left off their more harmless pursuits of smuggling, and occasionally destroying a guarda costa; and, banding themselves together, they discovered that it was more lucrative to make piratical expeditions against the different Spanish settlements in the islands and on the main, than to live by the slower means of contraband trading. In the beginning of their career as smugglers and hunters, they acted as the rude pioneers of the different nations to which they belonged, clearing the way for the peaceful settlers of France and England, (both of which countries secretly supported, though they pretended to disown them;) but as they gradually relinquished their old means of subsistence, and increased in power and daring, they became the curse of that part of the world. Like the Trappers and Rocky Mountain men of some twenty years back, they treated the Indians with the greatest cruelty, shooting them like

dogs, when they got a chance, and looking upon the Spaniards as bees that must be destroyed to get at the honey.

The first English and French settlements in the West Indies were formed by the buccaneers,—the former nation seizing the Tortugas, at the east end of Cuba, the latter the island of St. Kitts, or St. Christopher. Here they formed regular rendezvous, and left their old men, women, and children when they went on a marauding expedition. Some of their laws and customs, arising from the peculiarities of their mode of life, were very remarkable. They formed themselves into "tontines" of five or six, clubbing their wealth and booty, the survivors taking the whole of it. When any number banded themselves together for an expedition, the share of each man was settled beforehand, and the value of the wounds they might receive. A right arm was valued the most highly; a finger and an eye at the same amount,—very unfairly, I think,—and at only one-sixth of the value of a right arm. Their dress, adopted originally most probably for the sake of convenience and economy, was considered so becoming, and struck such terror into the hearts of their enemies, that it was continued by them. It consisted of a shirt and trousers, dipped in the blood of cattle, and buckskin mocassins, and cap.

Although in some isolated cases some good points might be discovered in the character and conduct of the buccaneers, they were, few and far between, "linked with one virtue and a thousand crimes." Generally speaking, they combined the cruelty and bloodthirsty revenge of the savage with all the other

vices of gambling and drinking, the usual accompaniments of an utterly lawless life; and they were instances of what Macaulay terms "that most frightful of all spectacles, the strength of civilization without its mercy." The atrocities related of some of them would be incredible, were they not attested by eye-witnesses. Of Lolonnais, a Frenchman, it is related that he used frequently to throw overboard the entire crews of vessels he had captured, one by one, that he might have time to watch and to enjoy their dying struggles. He is said to have struck off the heads of eighty persons with his own hand, refreshing himself with sucking the blood of his victims, as it trickled down his sword! Another Frenchman, Montbar, called by the Spaniards "El Exterminador," from his unmitigated cruelty, was equally as bad. To such monsters in human shape might with truth be applied those lines in Phedre—

> "Le ciel avec horreur voit ce monstre sauvage,
> Le terre s'en émeut, l'air en est infecté;
> Le flot qui l'apporta, recule épouvanté."

CHAPTER XIV.

BLOODHOUNDS—GARROTE—YACHT—BAHAMAS—COLUMBUS—FLYING FISH.

THE breed of dogs so famous as the Cuban bloodhound, was introduced into the West Indies by the Spaniards to hunt down the Caribs. They are now employed as a guard against the flight of the slaves, and to track those who do run away. They are very ferocious-looking animals, and far from amiable. Lopez the liberator was run down in the mountains by dogs. One day when walking about ten miles from the Havana with two companions, we entered the yard of a plantation, to seek shelter from a tropical deluge that was at hand. We had hardly advanced fifty yards before fifteen or twenty of these big brutes, looking as large as young calves, came bounding towards us with open mouths and bristling backs; retreat was impossible, and as we had nothing but small switches, our position was anything but agreeable. I thought of Mr. Borrow's receipt for frightening savage dogs, viz. of squatting down till you are on a level with the dog's head, and looking at him very hard; but it struck me, that though that method might answer very well with one dog, particularly if you had a very thick stick or a pistol, yet with ten or

a dozen you might be taken in the rear with great advantage in that position. But although these enormous animals looked so fierce, they did not seem inclined to come to close quarters, for when we stood still they did the same, and when we advanced they retired; an agreeable manœuvre, which we took care not to interrupt by any precipitancy. Thus we remained in anything but a perfectly happy state of mind, advancing a few inches at a time for nearly a quarter of an hour, when the baying of the dogs brought an overseer to our rescue.

During my stay at the Havana, a soldier was executed by the "garrote-vil," for shooting his sergeant. On the principle of seeing everything once, I had made up my mind to witness the execution; but as I have a great dislike to witnessing suffering, as the day approached I began to feel less and less disposition to go, and on the morning appointed I made a compromise between my sense of duty and my inclination, and thinking that I should perform the former quite as well by seeing the garrote with its miserable occupant after the most painful part of the exhibition was over, as if I had been present at the execution itself, I went half-an-hour late. I found the garrote, with the body fixed in it, guarded by a few soldiers; some negroes and children were "loafing" about. This mode of execution has been so often described, that there is hardly any necessity for me to do so now. The culprit sits on a little stool, with his back against a post; an iron collar, opening in front, is put round his neck, and, at a given signal two executioners, standing behind, turn a very powerful screw, and death by suffocation and fracture of the spine is

immediate. In the present instance death must have been instantaneous, and not very painful; for, except being rather blackened, and a little blood about the nose and mouth, the face was not much distorted.

Whilst I was standing there the executioners arrived in a volante to take the body down. The means of compression must have been enormous, for when the collar was unscrewed the neck was compressed almost flat. It was disgusting to see the levity of the executioner, himself reprieved from the garrote, and his negro assistants; they were chucking the dead man under his chin, laughing at the blackness of his face, and pointing to their own, as if there were more similarity between them in death than there had been in life. When disengaged from the garrote, the body was thrown into the bottom of a volante, and the executioners jumping in after it, they went to the hospital.

A negro's face, when he is in a passion, is the most painfully disgusting sight in the world; he gets quite pale, and his eyes seem full of blood. The day I left the Havana, I had hired a negro, with his dray, to take my traps down to the wharf. When he had unloaded I gave him half-a-dollar—munificent pay; but the nigger, thinking, I suppose, that I was a young hand, wanted more; upon which I gave him a short answer, and motioned him to go away. He flew immediately into a most frightful passion, getting quite pale, and his features assumed such a hideous expression, as if combining every bad passion that human nature is capable of, that I quite gazed upon him in wonder. He struck his breast and shook his hands at me, and then lifting them up and grinding

his teeth, he appeared to be praying to his gods and registering a vow of revenge. As a crowd had now collected, watching his frantic gestures, I got into the boat and pushed off. This made him still more excited, so much so that I almost expected him to spring after me. As far as I could recognise him, he was standing in the same place, and apparently in the same uneasy state of mind. Luckily, the negroes are never allowed to carry any weapon, not even a knife, for their quarrels are very frequent, and their passion and revenge so fierce and blood-thirsty, that continual bloodshed would be the result. I can fancy nothing more dreadful than a slave-rising, in which all the most horrible passions of the most cruel of all savages, who have been kept under by the lash and low-feeding, break out without any restraint.

In Hayti, the frightful atrocities they committed against the whites are perfectly incredible. They were, however, only retaliating cruelties with which they had become quite familiar from having for years been the victims of them.

The character of the negroes, the Koromantyn in particular, is very peculiar. A slave will go through any amount of entreaty and humiliation to escape punishment for a crime he knows he is guilty of; but if punished for one of which he is innocent, his pride will rebel, and sooner than utter one word of complaint or entreaty, will die by inches by the most excruciating of tortures. During the unheard of atrocities committed against the Maroons, or revolted negroes of the French and Spanish islands, the punishment of flogging to death was very common; the poor victims were never known to utter a groan, but, if possible, would

throw back their heads, and swallow their tongues, which naturally choked them in a few minutes. This method of escaping the barbarity of their executioners became so common, and spoilt so much sport, that their kind masters, sooner than that they should have the crime of self-murder on their hands, placed flaming brands to their mouths, thus preventing them having any hand in their own destruction.

There are two attacks that Europeans generally suffer more or less from, after a few weeks' sojourn in the Havana: they consist of an inflamed liver, and that worst of all inflammations,

"The inflammation of one's weekly bills."

They are, generally speaking, the combined effect of rather an excessive indulgence in *petits soupers* and opera boxes. As I was suffering a good deal from the former attack, I thought it as well to consult an Æsculapius. His advice was sharp, short, and astonishing. "Eat no meat," "drink no wine," and "get into a cooler climate as soon as you can." However, as I was engaged that very evening to dine on some *ortolans aux truffes* at the "Trois Frères" of the Havana, where we had the promise of some "*very curious*" old West India Madeira, I explained to him that it would be utterly impossible to follow his first two directions, and that, as I had just accepted an invitation to go to the Spanish main, it was very improbable that I should obey him in the third. He smiled, and acknowledged that the first two excuses were valid, but he shook his head at the third, and advised me strongly not to go further south at that season. I rather expect that the Spanish medical professors

of the Havana have not progressed much since the days of Dr. Langrède. Certainly a doctor's position with regard to the comparative amounts of censure and praise bestowed upon him for his professional exertions, is very far superior to that of any of the other learned professions; for whilst he gets unqualified praise and gratitude from those patients he cures, he is annoyed with no censure or complaints from those he kills. As Molière says, "Le bon de cette profession est, qu'il y a parmi les morts une honnêteté, une discrétion la plus grande du monde; jamais on n'en voit se plaindre du médecin qui l'a tué." However, there are some first-rate English physicians at the Havana, equal to any emergency.

I can fancy no place or climate so suitable for persons with delicate chests as the Havana; it combines as it were the amusement of Paris with the climate of Madeira; the weather is always equable and mild, except during the season of the "Nortes," from which, however, it is very easy to get shelter. And there is that continual excitement arising from a routine of indolent amusement, which is of so much importance to an invalid, as interfering with the constant rumination of symptoms and sicknesses which every hypochondriac fancies he suffers from and nobody else, and the unceasing contemplation of which not unfrequently by themselves aggravate the disease a hundred-fold. For my own part, I would rather die of consumption, supposing always it was a choice of evils, in the Havana, than linger out a valetudinarian existence in Madeira or Nice, where the chief part of the society is composed of hectic invalids on their last legs, whose sickly round of forced gaiety—

more resembling the society of the French prisons during the Reign of Terror than anything else—is only interrupted for a day or two (not more, for they bury very quickly in those countries) by the death of one of their number.

The great disadvantage of the Havana is the expense of living and house-rent, which exceeds either London or Paris. The dread of *el vomito prieto*, or yellow fever, is almost a bug-bear at the Havana: last season there were only three fatal cases amongst the ten thousand troops stationed there, and only thirty cases altogether. An English physician who had resided in Cuba for nearly twenty years, told me that he never calculated on losing more than three per cent. of his fever patients. Either the fever must be very mild or the patients must be remarkably tough, for three per cent. is far below the average deaths from English fevers.

After spending three weeks most luxuriously, and with a keen sense of enjoyment, at the Havana, our travelling trio, that together had braved the dangers of flood and field during nearly twelve months, separated, not in anger but in sorrow. Two more agreeable men or better travelling companions in every respect it has never been my fortune to meet; and never once, whether luxuriating in civilised diggings in the cities, or fasting on "pretty considerable hard doings" on the prairie, did I ever wish for better.

One went to Jamaica, thence to Mexico, California, and the Sandwich Islands; the other returned to the States to shoot bears; thence he went to Mexico, where he shot "greasers;" whence, being anxious to try

another prairie trip, he returned to America, and started for the Rocky Mountains, where he is at this moment, frozen up in some ravine or trader's hut, possibly chewing his mocassins for want of something better.

I accepted a most agreeable invitation from my friend Sir G. D———, to accompany him in his yacht the *Ariel*, on a cruise through the Antilles down to the Spanish main. His original intention was first to have visited Guiana and the Victoria Regina, and subsequently to have gone to Santa Martha, and, ascending the Rio Magdalena, to have reached Santa Fé de Bogotà; but the wet and hurricane seasons compelled him to modify his plans considerably. On Saturday, the —— of March, after having slept on board several nights, during which we were waiting for a slant of wind, we got under weigh at 6 A.M. with a fair breeze for the Bahamas. The *Ariel* was a fore and aft schooner of one hundred and twenty tons, new measurement, built by White, of Cowes, and for her size was the most comfortable and best sea boat I ever sailed in. Her owner was not one of your Isle of Wight and river nauticals, who get under weigh after breakfast, and, if the weather is very fine, remain out till dinner, and who consider a trip to the Channel Islands or Cherbourg as no small feat; he had crossed the Atlantic three times in the *Ariel*, the last time having made the voyage from Barbadoes to the Isle of Wight in twenty-eight days, and the return voyage in thirty-three days!—not bad sailing. She was the first vessel of the Royal Yacht Squadron that had been seen in the West Indies, and consequently to the Spaniards, who were not acquainted

with the nautical propensities of English gentlemen, she was a subject of considerable astonishment; and in many instances I fancy they began to imagine she was an elegant resuscitation of one of their old buccaneering crafts. Her crew consisted of a sailing-master, eight men, two boys, a cook, and a steward.

I wonder nautical gentlemen do not take their yachts to the West Indies more frequently than they do, for the cruising, except during the hurricane months, from July to November, is very agreeable and tolerably safe, always supposing your master is a first-rate navigator—an indispensable point where the currents are so rapid and so variable, and where the coral reefs spring up in the deepest water to within a few feet of the surface, giving no indication of their proximity by the soundings around them. For the first two days, during which we were beating, *with* the gulf stream, against a head-wind through the Florida Straits, the *Ariel* was a great deal too lively, and the sea far too free and bounding in its movements to suit me, and I lay in my berth in that state that admits of no comfort; however, every now and then I had the pleasure of being informed that there was a glorious breeze, and that we were beating everything in grand style. This exciting fact, which, had I at that moment possessed the "*mens sana in corpore sano*," might have caused me intense delight, did not, I am ashamed to say, in my then unamiable state of mind, elicit any feeling but one of intense disgust that every one was not ill as well as myself; however, on the second day I was all right again, and in a more amiable mood, able to enjoy to the full the delicious warmth of the weather, and the lovely colour of the water, which

was so clear that you could see the shells and sea-weed lying on the coral or sand at the depth of many fathoms.

Monday.—Fine breeze, passed a large barque ashore on a reef called the Bimini: she was surrounded by small wrecking schooners from Nassau. These wreckers seem to have an intuitive perception of when and where their prey is to be found: for as in the Pampas of South America, no sooner does a horse die, than the condors assemble from all directions, although not one had been visible before; so no sooner does an unfortunate vessel get into a scrape amongst the Bahama reefs, than the wreckers, which had till then been invisible, seem to discover her by some secret means, and flocking round her like so many birds of ill-omen, either claim salvage at once, or if their assistance is refused, generally manage to inveigle her into some worse predicament, where their assistance is indispensable. The vessels saved in that manner are taken into Nassau, and the salvage money paid into the Government court. The revenue arising from it amounts to 22,000*l.* per annum. We made out the Great Isaac, Little Isaac, Hen-and-Chickens and numerous other reefs known and dreaded by mariners. The Gulf stream, which flows through the Straits of Florida at the rate of eighty miles a-day, gets interrupted in its course by the reefs and islands on the Bahama banks, and forms such innumerable eddies and counter-currents that none but the natives themselves can navigate them with any confidence. It struck me that our navigation was rather of the "happy-go-lucky" description; however, "fear not, but trust in (New) Providence," was literally our feel-

ing, and we were rewarded by anchoring off the town of Nassau, the capital of the island of New Providence, about mid-day on Wednesday, four days and a-half from the Havana. The Bahamas or Lucayos islands consist of twelve low coral islands surrounded by innumerable reefs, separated from each other by shallow intricate passages which render the approach of large vessels impossible. After their discovery and partial settlement by the Spaniards they were totally deserted for some years, when they were occupied in force by the Buccaneers, who finding the islands of St. Kitts and the Tortugas rather too warm a berth for them, fixed upon them as a very convenient location from whence to carry on their depredations on the Spanish gold ships, as they took their course through the Florida Straits. During the American war the Bahamas were well stocked with privateers that inflicted great damage on the American trade: the fact is, the Bahamas, owing to their position at the entrance of the Gulf stream, and completely protected as they are by almost inaccessible reefs, command the whole of the New Orleans and the Mexican, and most of the West Indian trade, and during war time these comparatively barren reefs are of as much importance as the fertile island of Cuba. New Providence, the largest and most thickly inhabited of the group, is situated just without the tropic; the climate is healthy and temperate, but the hurricanes are very severe.

Nassau is rather a neat looking town, situated round a tolerably convenient bar-harbour; the natives are called "conchs," in the same way the natives of Gibraltar are called "scorpions," the Maltese "smitches," &c.: they are an amphibious race, all

their occupations being either on the surface or at the bottom of the sea, either catching turtle, or wrecking, or diving for sponges and conch pearls; they are the most marvellous swimmers I ever saw, and appear to have very little dread of the sharks. The women cultivate large crops of pines, which, since the steamers have ceased to call at Turk's Island, and consequently the English market is lost, are rather a drug in the market. They are now trying to discover some cheap method of manufacturing the fibres and shreds of the leaves into handkerchiefs and dresses: I saw some specimens that were excessively beautiful, but I believe the manufacture is as yet too expensive to pay.

On Thursday morning, after a most luxurious bathe, which the idea of the possibility of the sharks being lookers on rendered rather exciting, we landed to view the lions. We spent the day in regular West Indian fashion, commencing with sangaree at an early hour at the mess-room, and concluding the evening with claret at the same hospitable abode: however, as an excuse for such conduct, be it understood that there was not much else to be done; a very short space of time sufficed to see everything of interest. We visited one sponge establishment where there were some twenty negroes cleaning and packing some tons weight of sponges; we bought for a few dollars sponges enough to have stocked a dozen chemists' shops in England. The Bahama sponges are very coarse, and only fit for rough work, and by no means equal to the soft Turkey sponges from the Mediterranean. They grow to an enormous size, and one that was shown to us as intended for the Great Exhibition, was about the size of an ordinary haycock.

The shell-work is very pretty, and the women who make them display great skill and dexterity in forming durable articles out of the most brittle of materials. The Bahama reefs are the only places where the conch pearl is found in perfection: it is formed by the fish that inhabits the conch shell, and is found adhering to it in the same way that the common pearl is found in the oyster. When perfect it is of a pale delicate pink colour, and varies from the size of a pea to a small cherry; when of the latter size and of a perfect colour and shape it is valued very highly in Europe, but the fishermen who discover them sell them very cheap, and pearls that in England may possibly fetch fifty or sixty pounds are not unfrequently sold for ten or twelve shillings. The Mulatto women of Nassau are pretty, and the men civil, which are praiseworthy peculiarities you may search the other English West India islands through without meeting.

In the evening we dined at the mess of one of the West Indian regiments. Most of the members of the mess had paid either one or two visits on duty to the coast of Africa, and I was rather surprised to hear that they rather looked forward than otherwise to their routine of duty in that, according to my ideas, most deadly climate, considering that the discomfort and unhealthiness of the two years' service was more than repaid by the few months' leave before going there, and the year's leave on their return. It is only one proof out of a hundred that in nine cases out of ten, dangers owe more than half their horrors to the imagination, and diminish as they approach or become unavoidable. Amongst the black waiters that did duty behind our chairs during dinner, figured many

that bore the names of living heros, and of the mighty dead,—Ovidius Naso, Tiberius Gracchus, Fitzroy Somerset, Napoleon Buonaparte, bustled about and jostled each other to get more food or more champagne for their respective masters, in the most unpoetical and unheroic style.

The West Indian regiments are entirely recruited from the coast of Africa, no West Indian negro, on account of their notorious pusillanimity, being allowed to enlist; and as none have been christened before they enlist, the recruiting officer gives them any name that enters into his head. Comparatively few of the soldiers speak English, their knowledge of the language being confined to the words of command. Their social position as full privates in her Majesty's service is so much higher than that of any other of the West Indian negroes, their pride in their uniform so great, and their difference in language and disposition so complete, that the pure Africans associate very little with the negroes of the islands, and in the event of any disturbances, far from having any disposition to fraternize with them against the whites, the greatest difficulty has been experienced, in some recent riots at Trinidad and elsewhere, to restrain their almost ferocious hatred of their black brethren. The fact is, the black soldier is proud of his position—that most valuable of all the feelings that can animate a soldier—so much superior to any that he could ever have hoped to have attained in his own country, and, moreover, has never been exposed to any of that debasing treatment, which in most countries has created an envious hatred of the whites. The wife of one of the black sergeants had died during the day, and in the evening

she was waked by the women of the regiment in real Irish style.

The first land Columbus made in the Western hemisphere was a small island some short distance to the south-east of New Providence. He christened it San Salvador, emblematical of the almost hopeless straits they were in when they discovered it. It is now known by the less euphonious name of Cat Island.

Anybody who, after a long homeward voyage, where everything has gone on smoothly, where food and liquor have been plenty, and the only hardship to endure has been the monotony, has experienced the almost nervous anxiety with which one strains one's eyes to catch the first glimpse of land or of a light, even when you know you are looking for a certainty, and that if you don't see it to-day you will to-morrow, can form some faint conception of the heart-bursting sensation Columbus must have experienced after a voyage of thirty days—during the whole of which time his life was in constant danger, both from the elements and from the anger and despair of his crew, who were alternately taunting him as a fool and swearing vengeance against him as the selfish cause of all their sufferings, and even he, sanguine as he was, began to think he had been seeking what did not exist, and had promised his crew that if they did not see land on the morrow he would return—when, on the evening of the 12th of August, standing on the forecastle of the *Santa Maria*, (*not* smoking his cigar, for tobacco had not been invented in those days, but chewing the bitter "quid" of disappointed expectations,) he saw a light flitting in

the distance, but was so fearful of disappointment that, though he pointed it out to his page, it was with strict injunctions not to mention it.

Who can realize his anxiety of mind during the few hours that elapsed between doubtful hope and firm conviction, or who can picture to themselves the intoxicating delight that reigned through the small fleet, when "Land," "Land!" sounds that re-echoed through many a heart that had almost, if not quite given up any hopes of seeing it again, was heard from the Pinto? Who can imagine it but he who has seen ninety men reprieved on the scaffold, or rescued from inevitable destruction? Then, indeed, Columbus must have experienced, ten thousand times exaggerated, the delirious joy of the gamester, who having staked his all on a single throw, has gained: the feeling that Alexander experienced in a small degree when, staking his juvenile reputation, he subdued Bucephalus before the sneering courtiers of his father's court: of Lord Clive, when after making up his mind to do battle, contrary to the advice of his council, he found himself a victor at Plessy: of Napoleon, when after toiling through the snows and glaciers of the Alps, he beheld the sunny plains of Lombardy stretching before him, and he felt that his glory was already achieved. At that moment, when, from being vituperated as the victim of a deluded misplaced confidence in his own theories, and as the murderer of a number of men, Columbus was hailed as "Conquistador," "Salvador," and other long names, he must indeed have felt he was "some Punkins, and no mistake."

I fancy it would have been a study worthy of a

philosopher to have analysed the difference in feeling that animated the mass of Columbus's crew when they marched in procession to the monastery of Rabida to devote themselves to the Virgin, and to offer up prayers for the success of their expedition; and when after thirty days of dejection and almost hopelessness they made land, and landing fell on their knees to return thanks for their safety. What were the hopes and inducements that prompted them to risk their lives in what may be considered as a reckless chance? and how were their feelings and their intentions of sacrificing all for lucre modified by the dangers and hardships they had undergone? I expect it would only afford additional proof that resolutions of improvement and reformation, prompted by sudden inducements of danger or misfortune, are effects that cease almost with their cause. Although it would be impossible, even supposing anybody wished to do so, to detract in any way from the glory of Columbus, yet two facts are undeniable: in the first place, he was by no means the first European that had set foot in the western world; and secondly, his wonderful science, or pre-science, and supposed knowledge of the existence of a new world, are exaggerated. As I said before, he never had any notion of discovering a new world, but only a new route to the old.

The Norwegian planted a colony in Iceland, in the year 874. This colony, in 982, extended to Greenland. Greenland is a sort of "no man's land," claimed both by America and Europe, and proves nothing. However, in 1003 a colony was planted in Vinland, which is supposed to have been part of Labrador, or Newfoundland, and as such, undeniably

a part of the American Continent. That Columbus could have had any knowledge of these discoveries, or, even supposing he had, that he could have had any conception that the same continent stretched three or four thousand miles, is incredible; and therefore he deserves all the credit of a new discovery, a fortuitous one certainly, for all the calculations and philosophical ideas that prompted his voyages were false.

When the minds of the mariners and philosophers were once led by the enthusiastic conceptions of Columbus to imagine that the East was to be reached with much greater ease and rapidity in a westerly direction, many circumstances that till that turn had been given to their thoughts would have passed unnoticed, began to attract their attention, and to enforce the conviction that land of some kind certainly did exist in the West. Several trunks of trees of species unknown in Europe and Africa, gigantic bamboos, and several specimens of carved wood, were washed ashore on the Azores and Canaries. These mysterious productions were supposed by the simple inhabitants of those islands to come from the enchanted Isle of St. Brandan, an ideal paradise situated far in the Western Ocean, shrouded from the view of the boldest mariner by continual mists. It is curious that the pagan Irish had, or have, a belief that after death their souls returned to their ancestors in a delightful island of the West. America is, certainly, their ideal and actual paradise just at present.

But far more remarkable than the washing ashore of trees, &c., was the fact of two bodies, with hair and features perfectly different from any of the races of the Old World, being cast up on one of the

Canaries, some years before Columbus had entertained any very serious thoughts of embarking on his voyage of discovery. The probability is, that these bodies came from Cuba or the Bahamas, and were drifted across the Atlantic by the gulf stream. When one considers the number of days (one hundred at the lowest computation, supposing them to have been left entirely to the guidance of the gulf stream) these bodies must have been exposed to the decomposing effects of sun and water, and the unceasing attacks of birds and fish, it seems almost incredible that they should have reached the Canaries in such a state of preservation as to allow of any difference being remarked in them from any other bodies that had been under water three months. However, the fact is mentioned by Herrera, Las Casas, and other credible, or incredible, authorities, and therefore should not be doubted; in nine cases out of ten it is less troublesome to believe than to doubt. I suppose there is very little doubt that the stories one reads of the execrable cruelty of the Spaniards, and the massacre of thousands upon thousands of the natives of the West India islands, are grossly exaggerated. It is incredible that the Bahamas, for instance, which, according to the reports of the Spaniards, swarmed with inhabitants, could possibly have supported more than a few thousand inhabitants at the most; and it is contrary to received experience, that savages living in a state of nature, on the fruits of the soil, without any of the aids of civilization, should have existed in such numbers as has been represented.

That the early discoverers did exaggerate all their accounts of the New World most grossly, is evident

from many relations, which, from their non-existence at the present moment, it is in our power to disprove. Las Casas, a Dominican friar that accompanied Columbus on his second voyage, a man of a heated and enthusiastic imagination, in describing the fertility and beauty of a certain district in the island of Cuba, says that within a space of twenty leagues there were twenty-five thousand rivers! Cuba is remarkably deficient in rivers. Now it is quite as easy to increase the number of inhabitants from a few hundreds to several hundred thousand, as it is to multiply a few individual rivers into twenty-five thousand.

If the aboriginal races of the Antilles have totally disappeared, why should we not account for it by the same agents that we know destroy savage races in the present day? Spirituous liquors, smallpox, and other diseases following close in the wake of civilized man, have been the real destroying angel in New Zealand, Australia, and California; why should not that have been the case in the West Indies?

Although the guns and ships, and the superior intellectual and physical power of the early Spaniards, at first struck the aboriginal inhabitants of the continent and islands of the New World with dread and admiration for their conquerors, yet this feeling soon began to abate for a people whose manners and maxims of life were so different from their own, and whose cruelty towards them was so great, and they began to regard them with a species of contempt, calling them "men without fathers or mothers," who, having no land of their own, invaded that which belonged to other people. The Caribs, in particular,

were very bitter in their hatred. They christened the early Spaniards "Froth of the Sea," query "Meerschaum?"

The next day, after refusing innumerable invitations to maroons and "bull" pic-nics, we got under weigh towards evening, and stood well out to the eastward to get the trade wind for Barbadoes. Shortly after getting clear of the gulf stream we got amongst the grassy sea, composed of immense matted masses of floating sea-weed, known to science as the *fucus natans*. This sea-weed exists in great quantities in two portions of the North Atlantic ocean, both just within the tropic of Cancer, and in very nearly the same parallel of latitude. One is on the coast of Africa, a little to the south of the Island of Teneriffe, and is known to mariners as the Sargossa Sea; the other covers the ocean for some hundred square miles, a little to the south-east of the Bahama banks. The former, the Sargossa Sea, was a source of great dread to the early navigators, especially to the Carthaginians, who had a notion that if they got entangled amongst it, their vessels would get fixed, and they themselves would perish of hunger and thirst. Comparatively few ships cross that part of the ocean between the Bahamas and the windward islands. Those bound for the leeward islands, New Orleans or Mexico, pass through the Straits of Florida, and those *en route* to the windward islands or the Spanish main stand well out to sea, where they keep the strength of the trade winds to the last. There was nothing occurred in our passage to Barbadoes but what is familiar to every one that has sailed the tropical seas;—sharks and whales, black fish and thrashers, flying fish and

glorious sunsets. The fights between the black fish on one side, and the thrasher and sword-fish on the other, are curious enough. The sword-fish prods the whale or black fish from below, and the thrasher waiting on the surface administers everlasting thumps with his long tail, with a regular motion, like the sails of a windmill moving round with a moderate breeze, directly he shows his back on the surface; what between loss of blood and want of air, the whale generally comes to grief, but how the conquerors partition the spoil, whether they devour it or not, I never could discover.

Nothing can be imagined more silvery and beautiful than a flock of flying fish sparkling in a tropical sun. Their flight is a sort of skimming movement, like a flat stone making ducks and drakes on the surface of a pond. When they first leave the water they do so with a spring of about fifteen feet high, and a hundred or a hundred and fifty in length, when they dip for an instant, and again rising, take a shorter flight. These flights get shorter and shorter, exactly as a stone does when its impetus is nearly gone, till at length, after six or seven dips in their native element, they remain there altogether. That they have the power of raising and depressing their flight, and of guiding themselves to a certain degree, is evident from the manner in which they "top" the advancing waves; that they can do so to any great extent is doubtful, from their so frequently falling on the decks of passing vessels. The notion that their aerial flights are prompted by the continual persecutions of their enemy, the dolphin, and that even then they spring from the frying-pan (it ought to be dripping-pan)

into the fire, as the albatross and other birds of prey snap them up directly they show a fin above the surface, is incorrect. I never saw them pursued by a dolphin, nor have I ever seen one snapped up by any bird. I fancy it is a natural buoyancy of disposition, arising chiefly from the possession of an excessively large air-bladder, and possibly the pursuit of some animalculæ or small fish that reside on the surface, that causes them to leave their native element for a few seconds, and that their alternate dipping and rising is only to keep their delicate wings moist and uninjured by the heat of the sun.

There is something very delightful in the sensation of reclining under an awning on the snow-white deck of an English yacht, gliding sleepily along with the trade wind at the rate of three or four miles an hour, the spotless sails scarcely "sleeping" with the softest of all soft breezes, your half dreamy attention divided between some entertaining book, (not too entertaining, that would entail exertion,) and watching with half-closed eyes the flights of innumerable flying fish, as they spring joyously from the deep blue sea, and skim swiftly along with outstretched wings, as if revelling in their little aeronautic trip, glistening in the sun as if of silver; not a sound to break the delicious stillness of all around, but the cool sounding ripple of the water at the bows as the vessel gently pursues her graceful course, (the rippling sound adds greatly to one's luxurious sense of enjoyment by imparting an idea of coolness,) or the occasional flap of some more than ordinarily energetic fish on the deck. Any sharp noise at such a time—the falling of a block on deck or the shriek of a sea-bird, would be actually painful.

You even feel quite annoyed with the black steward, when with napkin on wrist and glasses and decanter in hand, he disturbs you from your listless state of delicious repose, by acquainting you that it is "two bells," and requesting to know whether you will splice the main-brace! The nature of the pleasure experienced in a position of this kind is that arising from a perfect harmony of nature with your feelings at the moment. This harmony is so essential a part of all our enjoyments, that it alone renders the most insignificant objects sources of great pleasure, and without it no enjoyment can exist to anything like the same extent. Why, when watching boats ascending and descending the stream, does one experience such different sensations? The latter imparts a feeling of positive pleasure, whereas the former is not nearly so agreeable. The distinct objects from which the different degrees of pleasure are derived, are the same in both instances: in either case the boat and the rivers are pleasing objects in themselves, but there is considerably more harmony when nature and the boat are gliding together in unison, than when they are as it were in opposition.

One experiences a pleasurable sensation when reclining on a sunny bank, in watching the smoke lazily rising from some cottage in the distance. Smoke does not generally add to the beauty of the landscape or to the pleasures of sense, but in this instance it does, and is a source of actual pleasure, and if removed would cause a blank in one's enjoyment. This feeling is only caused by the perfect harmony existing at the moment between one's indolent feelings and the lazy movement of the smoke.

If a puff of wind were to arise and blow the smoke more rapidly, the pleasure arising from watching it would be entirely destroyed!

Sunsets at sea in the tropics are most gorgeous, that kind of sunsets that Danby loves to paint, and does so with such success. The crimson colours are most vivid, and on a calm day, as the sun reaches his resting-place in the west, he casts as it were a crimson pathway of glory across the sea, that undulates with a regular motion as if breathing, so distinct and so well defined, that one could fancy it was a path leading from the halls of Phœbus to those of his cousin Neptune, and one almost expected to see the jolly old Sun himself, or some of his demi-gods, come tripping along on their way to visit some of the Nereids or Oceanides!—a slight stretch of imagination. Ossian's description of a sunset was continually recurring to my mind, and I think, for grandeur of language and idea, it is not easy to beat it. "Thou hast left thy blue course in the heavens, golden-haired son of the sky! The west hath opened its gates; the bed of thy repose is there: the waters gather up to behold thy beauty: they lift up their trembling heads: they see thee lovely in thy sleep: they shrink away with fear. Rest in thy shadowy cave, O Sun, and let thy return be in joy."

CHAPTER XV.

BARBADOES—SNAKES—TOBAGO—BIRDS.

March 21*st.*—SIGHTED Barbádoes about mid-day, and anchored in Carlisle Bay at sunset, after a pleasant passage of thirteen days. I don't know any single location on the face of this "tarnal arth" less to my fancy than Barbadoes, or any place that I would sooner select for the residence of my greatest enemy. It swarms with negroes, blacker, and more hideous, and a thousand times more bumptious and conceited than any other negroes in the world. Their conceit, and the manner in which they ape the whites, is perfectly frightful. All the women with any pretence to style or elegance wear "uglys," and a kind of awning from the bonnet to shade their (black) alabaster necks! White veils are indispensable, and any female negro without a parasol and a fan is considered *hors la loi* by her sweet (?) female friends. The conceit of the men in white waistcoats, white hats, and neckcloths, and a mincing step, as if performing *Cavalier seul* in a quadrille, is equally disgusting. As the Barbadian negroes are the most disagreeable in manner, so are they in figure. Their great splaw feet, with elongated heels, are hideous when *au naturel*, but doubly so when compressed into tight patent leather boots. "*Ex pede nigrem*,"

—a Badian *nigrem*, at least,—is true to the letter, for no other people have feet in any degree resembling theirs. Their legs are formed on totally different principles from any other legs I ever saw. They are an instance of what classics call ὕστερον πρότερον, the cart before the horse, or rather the calf before the shin, for the calf is regularly slewed round to the front of the leg, forming a graceful curve, which the Badian ladies, whose pedestals, by-the-bye, are much straighter and more graceful that their lords', call "Cupid's bow," whether ironically or not I cannot say. The ancients imagined that mercy was seated in the knees; amongst the negroes the seat of feeling is decidedly in the shins; for though you might punch a negro's head during a month of Sundays without any satisfaction, one tap on "Cupid's bow" makes him your obedient servant at once.

Bridgetown, the capital of Barbadoes, is the paradise of negroes; and dignities are weekly events. The Badian looks down upon the negroes of the other islands much in the same way that a London snob looks down upon one from the provinces. Towards the end of last century, when the French Revolution was at its height, and, from excessive strong party feeling in this country, there was some faint idea that the throne was menaced, the Badians, in the magnificence of their loyalty, begged George the Third to remember that, if he was driven out of England, Barbadoes was ready to receive him. There are two peculiarities in Barbadoes, however, which go far to redeem its multitudinous sins: the turtle and preserved ginger are undeniable; the flying-fish also, which the fishers catch with nets set *above* the surface (rather a novel idea), are also excellent. Moreover, it is the

only island in the West Indies that supports absentee proprietors. This proceeds from the soil being peculiarly suited to the growth of the sugar-cane; and from the abundance of labour, which can always be procured to any extent at 8*d.* per day, it is about the most thickly populated tract of land in the world. The island is thickly sprinkled with dead cocoa-nut-trees, which give it rather a melancholy appearance. Some years back the cocoa-nut-trees supplied one of the chief articles of its commerce; but within the last few years some blight or insect has affected them, and at present there is hardly one bearing fruit in the whole island.

During our stay at Barbadoes, I went to see some specimens of snakes, indigenous to the West India islands. It is a curious fact, that whereas Cuba, Barbadoes, Tobago, and one or two more of the islands, are perfectly free from poisonous snakes, Trinidad, Martinique, and Ste Lucie are plentifully supplied, especially the latter, which actually swarms with them. The St. Lucians say that their island lies under a curse of snakes: so numerous and so deadly are they, that no money would tempt a native to walk five yards through the bush without pausing every step to examine. In the centre of Ste Lucie are two sugar-loaf peaks, of some two or three thousand feet in height. The natives, especially the negroes, have a conviction that they are protected by serpents, and that no man will ever live to reach their summit: certain it is that many have tried the ascents, but snakes do exist in such numbers, that the enterprise did not repay the risk. I saw two specimens of snakes from Ste Lucie, the rat-tail and the crebo, whose connexion is rather remarkable. The former

is a hideous scaly snake, of about two feet in length, with an enormous mouth, very much disproportioned to its size, and fangs of upwards of an inch in length. It is very lethargic and stupid in its habits, and when roused suddenly, is just as likely to attack as to fly from its aggressor. The negroes say that when attacked by man it springs off the ground at its assailant, aiming its blow at the inside of the thigh, a little above the knee: however, wherever the blow takes effect it is fatal in a very few minutes. The other snake, the crebo, is a slim, graceful (if such a term is applicable) snake, of from three to four feet in length; it is perfectly innocuous, but, what is very curious, is a determined enemy of the rat-tail, which it hunts and destroys, actually devouring it. In consequence of this peculiar taste, and their aptitude for domestication, numbers are tamed and encouraged to take up their residence in the houses of Ste Lucie, where they perform the double duty of mouser and rat-(tail) catchers. They are under the protection of the law, and heavy fines are imposed for their destruction.

The average number of deaths by fever amongst the troops at Barbadoes, is less than in most of the other islands; but when the Yellow Jack makes its appearance as an epidemic, which it does every five or six years, its ravages are both fast and furious. The deadly effects of West Indian living and a West Indian climate are painfully remarkable in the church-yards in Bridgetown. I counted the graves of seven officers of one regiment, and six of another; that is sharp work when one considers that regiments are seldom there more than a year. The mortality amongst the men is very great, and even when they

do not die, they become aged in an extraordinary degree. This, however, is as much the effect of drink as of climate; and where new rum is so plentiful and so cheap, and the inducements for drinking, viz. opportunity and propinquity, and the exhausting effect of the climate, are so great, it is scarcely to be wondered at. Coming from the Havana, where the troops were dressed in white-duck coatees, with red epaulets and facings, white trowsers, and broad-brimmed Panama hats, I was rather struck with the grilled appearance of our troops, in heavy red coats, buttoned up to the breast, and thick trowsers, keeping guard in the hottest island of the tropics in the identical dress they would wear if on duty in Nova Scotia. The Highlanders with their unwieldly bonnets struck me as being especially out of place.

I was not at all sorry, when after a delay of three days at Bridgetown D—— expressed his determination to start at once for the main. I considered Barbadoes anything but a paradise, although it is said to be one of the best quarters in the West Indies. What annoyances and disadvantages the others can possibly possess that Barbadoes has not, I cannot imagine.

As we were leaving the Havana, D—— and one of his friends invested in a litter of miserable, squealing, half-starved, half-skinned abortions, called "Havana lion dogs;" they were said to be of some very rare, valuable breed, which is gradually becoming extinct, and their great value and beauty consisted in their excessive diminutiveness: certainly, those that made their appearance on board the *Ariel* were small enough for anything, even to have satisfied the king in the fairy tale of the "White Cat;" for although ours

could hardly have been compressed into a walnut shell, a cocoa-nut would have held them with ease. However, my idea was, and is still, that they were five or six days old puppies, whose eyes had been opened before their proper time by some unnatural means; and my firm conviction is that, if Providence had been so indifferent to our auricular comfort as to have suffered them to live, they would have grown to a larger size than was expected. However, after getting blind from excessive ablutions in strong soap and water, and other little applications that were considered good for their health and beauty, they gradually died off one by one, and their bodies were committed to the deep, with no great feeling of regret on our part. When we arrived at Barbadoes, only one was alive, and this one was missed in the most remarkable manner the day after we arrived :—

"We search'd him that day, and we search'd him that night,
We search'd him in fear, and we search'd him in fright;"

and at length, not being able to find him, we came to the conclusion he had fallen overboard, and afforded a homœopathic dainty to some shark; nothing more was thought of him till the day we got under weigh for Tobago, when, as the mainsail was being unrolled, a horrid stench was clearly perceptible: numerous suppositions were mooted as to its cause, when some sailor, more sagacious than the rest, surmised "puppy," and sure enough it was so, for as the sail was carefully opened the perfume became stronger, and at length, surrounded by a dark stain in the snow-white sail—

"A number of bones lay mouldering there,
In the very same skin that the dog used to wear."

His fate was but too evident; trying to get a comfortable location on the mainsail, he had been rolled up, and shocking to say, was squeezed to death.

Owing to a slight difficulty with the crew, arising from the captain having imbibed rather too much porter,—it must have been remarkably strong, as he solemnly declared he had only taken one glass,—we did not get under weigh till after midnight, when slashing along with a fine breeze, we sighted the highlands of Tobago about 4 P. M. next day: but as the passage through the reefs into Scarborough Bay is difficult and dangerous, and hardly safe after dark, we stood off and on till daylight, when we sloped into a comfortable berth, as much sheltered from the heavy surf as possible. The island of Tobago has a very picturesque appearance from Scarborough Bay; the hills ascend precipitously from the water's edge to the height of six or seven hundred feet, at the very summit of which is the fort,—so called, I suppose, because there are no guns,—and the barracks. We landed and toiled up to the barracks under a sweltering sun; the road ascending between groves of cocoa-nut and groe-groe cane, was very tropical, and the view of Scarborough Bay at our feet, with the little vessels bobbing about at anchor, and the surf breaking in a white fringe on the reefs that completely surrounded the harbour, was very pretty, and I almost wondered how we had managed to thread our passage in. Both my companions had been to Tobago before, and they found numerous friends, military and civil: we were consequently received with great hospitality, and after an inordinate consumption of bitter beer, our plans were made for the day. We

had brought a large barrel of ice from Barbadoes, which was welcomed as a luxury that those only who have experienced a tropical heat can appreciate: after lunch we were all mounted on raw-boned active rosinantes, and started for the Highland Falls, about seven miles distant. The road meandered through a remarkably pretty country, thickly wooded, and partially cultivated with sugar-cane. The interior of Tobago is composed of innumerable irregular conical hills of different sizes, which rather reminded me of a gigantic white ant's or termite's nest. These hills were evidently the effect of volcanic agency, which must in former days have been very active, for the chief part of the soil is composed of breccia and calcined stones. The Highland Falls are remarkably picturesque, and the approach to them, a narrow path winding round the face of a precipitous glen, is one of the prettiest views I saw in the West Indies.

I remarked some mountain cabbages, whose roots were in the ravine far below, whilst their summits towered far above us, whose height must have been enormous —more than one hundred and fifty feet, I should think. The fall itself is caused by a small stream, insignificant in summer, but considerable in the rainy season, flowing over a smooth plateau, with a fall of about forty feet, into a wild rocky basin beneath. It is such a scene as Salvator would have painted, and it only needed a few bandits to be completely Italianized. We had a delicious bath in the cool effervescing water, which was about ten or fifteen feet deep, and moreover enjoyed the luxury of a glorious shower-bath under the falls. I don't know that ten or twelve men, *in puris naturalibus*, splashing and swimming about

in the water, are as picturesque as a group of bandits —certainly not so picturesque as the same number of nymphs would have been; but still, I have no doubt, with our horses grazing around us, and our vestments arranged in artistic bundles on the bank, we added to the scenic effect.

The Island of Tobago is supposed to be the island De Foe fixed upon as the residence of his imaginary Robinson Crusoe. The original and only authenticated narrative of a man's being left on a desert island and afterwards taken off, was the case of a Mosquito Indian named William, who was left by a buccaneering crew on the island of Juan Fernandez, about the year 1680, where he remained three years, when he was rescued by Dampier and others on a succeeding voyage. The island of Juan Fernandez would not have suited De Foe at all, as it is an island by itself, uninhabited, and far out of the reach of any savages from the main land. Now the island of Trinidad, which is not more than fifteen miles distant, and is plainly visible from Tobago, was formerly inhabited by the fiercest race of Caribs, who doubtless made excursions to the other islands to fish and hunt, and would have eaten up and digested poor Robinson Crusoe, his man Friday, and his dog and parrot, with the utmost complacency. Moreover, in the early editions of De Foe's work, the latitude of the island is given at 9° 22′ north, at the mouth of the great river Oroonoque. Robinson Crusoe's cave is to be seen in the island; but as most probably the author described it entirely from imagination, it must require a good stretch of it at present to find much similarity.

During our ride home, I was startled by hearing

what I fully imagined was the whistle of a steam-engine; but I was informed it was a noise caused by a beetle that is peculiar to Tobago. It is nearly the size of a man's hand; and fixing itself against a tree, it commences a kind of drumming noise, which gradually quickens to a whistle, and at length increases in shrillness and intensity till it almost equals a railroad whistle. It was so loud that, when standing full twenty yards from the tree where it was in operation, the sound was so shrill that you had to raise your voice considerably to address your neighbour. The entomological productions of the tropics struck me as being quite as astonishing in size and nature as the botanical or zoological wonders. There is another beetle, called the razor-grinder, that imitates the sound of a knife-grinding machine so exactly, that it is impossible to divest oneself of the belief that one is in reality listening to "some needy knife-grinder," who has wandered out to the tropical wilds on spec.

Tobago is the island that has given its name to the immortal weed that the great Sir Walter is supposed to have discovered there during his voyage to the main. He took some seeds with him to England, and thence sent them to his colony in Virginia, where the climate was discovered to be excessively well suited to its growth, and it soon became a most important article of export, and was in general use all over the world. Like all new discoveries, the use of tobacco was looked upon with great suspicion, and its effects supposed to be very injurious: the American Company issued orders against its cultivation by their agents; and the soft flabby old James I. even went so far as to write a pamphlet, which he termed a

"Counter-blast," against it. Tobacco at present is the bugbear of affectionate mothers, and the scape-goat of young men, who ostensibly lay to the head of smoking all the pale faces and headaches arising from late hours and late drinks.

After an agreeable party at mess, and an incredible consumption of iced beer and hot peppers, we adjourned to the yacht. Next morning after breakfast, horses being sent down for us to the landing-place, we ascended to the Fort to take a farewell of our hospitable entertainers. This disagreeable duty was completed by a late hour in the afternoon, when we returned to the yacht, accompanied by the whole garrison, I believe, as far as the landing-place. Just as we were under weigh and standing out of the harbour, we heard the faint report of a musket, and by the aid of telescopes we discovered our friends at the house of a civilian about half-way up the hill, where they had "brought up," to use a nautical phrase, to lay in a fresh stock of malt before completing the frightful ascent of seven hundred feet. We answered their musket by a six-pounder, and they continued firing and waving handkerchiefs most probably for a long time after we were quite out of sight and hearing. We were well out of the reef before sunset, and steered a south-east by east course for Georgetown, Demerara. As we had crossed the sun's highest altitude some days previously, and as that worthy was travelling north, whilst we were on our way south, the further we progressed the cooler the weather became, that is, it *should* have done so; but I guess the sun had left so much spare heat behind it, that we did not perceive the difference.

April 28th.—Blowing very fresh, with the most disagreeable chopping sea I ever remember. We were now stemming the stream that pours into the Caribbean Sea, between the islands of Trinidad and Tobago, and, after completing its almost Mediterranean course of the Caribbean Sea and the Mexican Gulf, issues through the Straits of Florida into the Atlantic Ocean as the great gulf stream. We experienced thirty-six miles of north-north-west current in twenty-four hours; but an officer of one of the West India steamers told me that in the passage from Georgetown to Tobago they had frequently to allow for seventy miles in the twenty-four hours. So that the gulf stream enters with the same velocity as it leaves the immense caldron of the Mexican Gulf. There must be some reason, that even natural philosophers, with the mighty Humboldt at their head, cannot discover, for the extraordinary rapidity of the gulf stream; the combined effects of evaporation, wonderful as it is in the tropics, and the peculiar conformation of the South American continent, could never give it half the velocity of seventy miles per day. The boobies and men-of-war birds frequent the rocks and islands near the main in great quantities. The former is a fat heavy looking bird; they fly rather slowly, and move their heads from side to side as they flap along, which gives them a very stupid appearance; they are totally devoid of fear of man, and flock about the ship as if they belonged to it, and not unfrequently settle on the masts and rigging. The man-of-war bird is a fine kestrel-looking gentleman, of dark handsome plumage, with two white feathers in the tail, curving gracefully out in opposite directions,

much in the same manner as the tail of a black-cock in good plumage. Their flight is lofty and apparently very powerful. Their treatment of the boobies is very unneighbourly:—very much what the conduct of a feudal bully of the olden days was to his hard-working defenceless neighbours. The boobies are stupid laborious birds, of very domestic habits, and every morning they may be seen in flocks going out to fish, returning toward sunset with their crop nicely filled with small fish, which they look forward to digesting in comfort at their homes, in the bosom of their families; but they count without their host, for no sooner does the man-of-war bird see his friend flapping lazily homewards with his maw in a tempting state of repletion, than, giving a premonitory shriek, he makes a swoop at him, and the poor booby is only too glad to save his existence by disgorging the hard-earned contents of his stomach, which the man-of-war bird catches with extraordinary rapidity before it reaches the sea. It is amusing to witness the fright and distress of the poor booby when he hears the dreaded "Stand and deliver;" but he does not hesitate long, for he delivers very quick, and bundles away in great trepidation, most probably breathing a fervent wish that his half-digested dinner may disagree with the "strong man armed" that has undertaken to finish it.

CHAPTER XVI.

GEORGETOWN—ESSEQUIBO—CUYUNI—VAMPIRES—SUI NOVEDAD.

April 29th.—DURING the whole day the water was very much discoloured; this was caused by the great river Orinoco, distant about fifty miles.

30th.—Night very squally. The coast of British Guiana is so low that you frequently do not make land till within a distance of five or six miles. We made the light-ship off Georgetown about 4 P.M., and in answer to our signal for a pilot, were boarded by a very diminutive negro, who took command with great dignity. As we were very eager to learn something about the Essequibo and the Victoria Regia, we asked him several questions on the subject, but he appeared to be in a most blessed state of ignorance; he said he thought a *man* named Schomburgh had ascended it some years back,—not a very respectful way of talking of such a distinguished traveller!

Anchored off the town, late at night, and landing without *pratique*, went up to the barracks of one of the West India regiments, where were also stationed two companies of the Queen's regiment.

May 1st.—After breakfasting on board, we went up to the barracks, where we were provided with horses, dog-carts, &c., to pay visits, and make

purchases and arrangements for the ascent of the Essequibo.

Georgetown lies very low, at the mouth of the Demerara river; it is rather a pleasing-looking town, and covers a great deal of ground, there being scarcely any house without its surrounding garden. The shops appeared remarkably good; and it struck me that there was quite as *much* if not *more* business doing than at Barbadoes—at all events, I liked the look of the place better. The market-place is first-rate, and well stocked with monkeys, parrots, macaws, pine-apples, bananas, and other tropical productions, animal and vegetable, too numerous to mention. In Demerara, as in all our West India possessions, except Barbadoes, there is a scarcity of labour. This has been partially remedied in some of the islands, by an occasional importation of Coolies from the East Indies. Two of these ships arrive annually at Georgetown with live cargoes, which are immediately engaged, at prices varying from 8*d.* to 1*s.* a-day. The climate agrees well with them; and though not physically so powerful as the negroes, yet they get through more work. Their appearance, both as regards feature and figure, is very far superior to that of the negro, and their intellectual endowments are also said to be of a higher order. Their dress, especially that of the women, is very picturesque, consisting generally of a crimson or blue cloth wound tight over the left shoulder and loins, and leaving the right arm free. Poor as many of them are, and not unfrequently in great want, they invariably have silver ornaments of some kind suspended from their ears, and worn round their arms

and ankles, some of which are of considerable value, and they part with them most reluctantly, even when compelled to do so by dire necessity, and though a higher price should be offered for them than their actual value. The Coolies seem to mingle very little with the negroes, and intermarriages never take place.

As four of the great aboriginal races of the world are to be found perfectly pure and untainted at Georgetown, it would be almost impossible to name a place where the same facility exists for contrasting their appearance and endowments. There you see the mild, inoffensive Indian from the forests of the Essequibo or the Pomeroon, his dress as scanty, his weapons as primitive, and his manner of life as simple, as they were four hundred, or very probably four thousand years ago. He is not more domesticated now than he was then, and he avoids the haunts of civilization almost as much as he would the bushmaster of his native wilderness; he only pays an occasional visit to the European towns, to sell his parrots and monkeys, his letter-wood or vanilla, in order to have a debauch on "soapy," or new rum, or perhaps to buy some beads or paint for his wife. Standing close to him, and almost double his size, you see a fine specimen of ebony, his thick lips, closely curled hair, brawny form and tattoed face, showing that he comes from some of the warlike tribes of the interior of Africa, brought over either as a slave or enlisted as a soldier. Near to him, again, you see the cringing form of some Hindoo mendicant, who, though shipped from his native country under an express engagement of working, thinks it more profitable, or even a matter of duty, to follow the occupation of a beggar, the hereditary pro-

fession, probably, of his caste: whilst bustling about and *hurrying*, even in this sweltering climate, you see white-jacketed and straw-hatted members of nearly every one of the European families. There is some slight similarity in figure and countenance between the Americans and the Asiatics, but "nature's livery" worn by the latter is considerably darker than that worn by the former. After having been so lately living with the Americans of North America, I had some curiosity to see whether, from a similarity of feature or otherwise, there was any reason to suppose that they were originally of the same race; one moment's observation sufficed to convince me of the common origin of the North and South American Indians; the features, form, and hair are identical, modified, of course, though very slightly, by the effect of climate.

After calling at Government-house to pay our respects to the Governor, we pursued our inquiries regarding the Victoria Regia, but could get no certain information as to the time and distance, and the amount of supplies necessary: some said it was nearly as far as the foot of the Andes, a thousand miles distant, and that we ought to take supplies for three months at least; others said it was not more than one hundred miles, and that three days' provision would be abundant; but all agreed in strongly recommending us not to go at all, as the rainy reason had commenced, and our chances of escaping fevers, agues, &c. were small indeed. However, being so near to our El Dorado, we determined not to be shaken in our plans by doubtful reports; as, generally speaking, nine persons out of ten have different ideas on

the same subject, the more opinions a traveller consults on his plans, the more confused and undecided he becomes.

At length, after getting pretty well confused by the different advice and information that was vouchsafed to us, and not having a very clear idea whether the lily were one or five hundred miles distant, we finished by laying in provisions that would have sufficed a party twice as numerous as ours in a trip to the Pacific; and having chartered a schooner to convey us to the penal settlement, some hundred miles from the mouth of the Essequibo, we desisted from our labours, and retiring to the yacht, consumed sherry and bitters, preparatory to dining at Government-house.

We had a very agreeable dinner, and in the evening accompanied the Governor and his lady to a ball, given by the British Guiana Loyal Mechanics' Institution. It is the crack "dignity" of the Demerara season; and this anniversary, in consequence of the Governor's kindness in attending, was expected to produce the most fascinating darkies of both sexes, and to eclipse (in darkness?) any *reunion* of the kind that had ever been known in Georgetown. When the Governor and his lady and guests arrived at the ball-room, we were received by the stewards, and marshalled, two and two, through lines of grinning blacks, to the end of the ball-room, where a dais was prepared for their Excellencies. The room was crowded, but was very select—no whites but those belonging to the Governor's party being admitted. When the Governor was seated, a loyal mechanic, the Adonis of the company, dressed in resplendent

patent leathers, white waistcoat, and a neckcloth that Brummel might have been proud of, *glisséd* from the end of the room, through a lane that was kept clear for him by the stewards, up to the Governor. At first I expected a *pas seul*, but was soon undeceived; for, drawing himself up, and throwing himself, as Monsieur Jabot says, *en position*, his right leg well out, his left hand on his heart, and his right gracefully extended toward the exalted personage he was addressing, he repeated by heart a magniloquent address, full of long words and sentences, untrammelled by any stops, complimenting the Governor on his "transparent" intellect, and thanking him and his "amiable consort" for the unwearied patience with which they had listened to his "preluminary address," and concluding by proposing three times three for her gracious Majesty, whom God preserve!

After the Governor had responded in a gracious speech, we were requested to procure partners for a quadrille. I solicited the hand of Miss Floriana, and was accepted with a graceful curtsy, and "Much pleasure, Sar;" and was cheered and supported through the Herculean labours of a dignity quadrille by a "soft black hand" pressing my arm. Miss Floriana's "get up" was equal, if not superior, to any in the room; this I told her, but she was fully convinced of that fact before. Her toilet consisted of a low white muslin dress, with a prodigal display of black charms, white satin shoes, and no stockings; while her head-dress was of pomegranate flowers, stuck thick into a head of such determined woolliness, that a weight of several pounds at the extremity of each hair would have been required to straighten it. When the

quadrille was finished, the guests were supplied with a glass of champagne, which, as I was very thirsty, I drank myself, and received a severe wigging, not more severe however than I deserved, from Miss Floriana in consequence, for drinking it myself instead of offering it to her. After dancing with Miss Penelope and Miss Theresa, "exhausted nature could no more," and I retired from what I felt to be an unequal contest with the black beaux of Georgetown.

As our arrangements regarding our transport to the penal settlements up the Essequibo had not been quite completed, we were forced to remain another day, and we finished off a pouring wet day with a rather wet evening at mess.

Next morning, feeling rather seedy, I suppose from drinking too much water before breakfast—a most injurious practice in hot climates!—we got under weigh in the small schooner we had chartered for the Essequibo; our party numbered five, of whom three were soldiers, and two T. G.'s. The Essequibo is about fifteen or twenty miles distant from the Demerara river. The entrance to it is about seven or eight miles broad, and deep enough for vessels of a considerable size, supposing they could cross the bar, which unfortunately has never above twelve feet of water over it. We ascended some ten or twelve miles with the tide, which ebbing towards evening, we anchored near the shore. At that hour, about an hour and a half before sunset, the woods seemed actually teeming with life; and the discordant screaming of parrots and macaws, howling baboons and razor-grinding beetles, was quite deafening. The difference between the confused hubbub of a South

American and the monotonous stillness of a North American forest, struck me as very remarkable. In the equinoctial regions, where day and night are of equal duration throughout the year, there is no twilight—darkness succeeding sunset almost as instantaneously as when a lamp is carried out of a room. The instant the upper limb of the sun sinks below the horizon, the indescribable Babel that has reigned through the forest for the last hour, as if every bird and animal were trying to have the last word, is suddenly hushed into perfect stillness—not a sound is heard, till perhaps towards midnight, when the beasts of prey, the jaguar, or the tiger-cat, are heard howling in the distance. There are no wolves in South America, as in North America, to waken the forest with their midnight chases. The fact of the night being of the same length as the day throughout the year, modifies to a wonderful extent the climate of the equinoctial regions, and renders it a tolerable abode for man. Were it not for this merciful provision, and the sun remained above the horizon for the same number of hours that it does during a long summer's day in higher latitudes, the evaporation and malaria caused by the excessive heat would be such that no human being, as at present constituted, could possibly exist.

May 4th.—The tide not serving, after breakfast we landed, intending to shoot some parrots and macaws; but unfortunately we had forgotten to bring the straight powder; and though several of the winged tribe were frightened, we bagged nothing but a large, fat, soft lizard, about three feet long, called a salampenter, or Solemn Peter, as the negroes call them. They feed on dead bodies of all kinds, preferring the

human, however, when they can get it. We tried to get a shot at some saccawinkee monkeys, that one of our boatmen saw, and which we could hear chirruping about the trees, but we were unsuccessful.

The saccawinkee is the most beautiful and amusing of all the tribes of South American monkeys. Their bodies are about six inches long, covered with long silky black hair, and their tails some inches longer; they have the most beautiful soft brilliant eyes, very prominent and very black. The Indians often tame them; but they are so delicate that I doubt whether there have been any instances of their having survived a passage to Europe. When tamed they are very wise and affectionate, but, like spoilt children, are very easily chagrined; hence the Dutch in Surinam call them shagarintee. We also tried to get a beetle, that made a noise exactly similar to a Jew's-harp, only much louder.

On our way back to the schooner, we saw two canoes scooped out of the silk-cotton-tree, filled with Arawauk Indians paddling down the stream. We shouted to them to come, but they only appeared to be making greater haste to avoid us. One was too quick for us; but, as we were lower in the stream than the other, we cut him off and brought him alongside. It was manned by an Indian and his wife, both stark naked, except the "queiou," two little naked children, and innumerable parrots, monkeys, terrapins, peccarys, &c., which they were carrying down to Georgetown to barter for liquor, paint, &c. We bought the peccary, some parrots, and all the bows and arrows and letter-wood that the Indians possessed.

The letter-wood, called by the French *bois du lettre,* and by the Indians *bourracourra,* is the most beautiful of all the ligneous productions of the South American forests. It is the heart of a tree growing from twenty to thirty feet in height. The trunk seldom exceeds sixteen or eighteen inches in diameter. After hewing off the white sap, which is very thick, the heart of the tree is discovered; it is very small, seldom more than twelve inches in circumference, in a tree whose diameter is sixteen inches. Hence great labour is required to obtain a very small piece of the wood, which, with its scarcity and unequalled beauty, has rendered it of great value. The wood is heavy, hard, and solid, having a fine even grain of a beautiful deep reddish colour, variegated in every part of its substance with black spots and figures bearing some resemblance to letters and notes of music; hence its name. It takes a most beautiful polish, superior to any other woods hitherto discovered; but its scarcity and the smallness of the pieces procurable, prevent its being used but for walking-sticks or for small pieces of furniture. The Indians make bows of it, which are very beautiful, but I expect are more for show than for use. Just as we were getting under weigh, our peccary escaped, but was soon shot by one of our party. They resemble the pig genus of Europe; but, owing to a glandular swelling on the back, they are not relished by the whites as food, though the Indians devour them freely. They roam the forests in herds of from fifty to five hundred, following their leader, always the smallest of the herd, and not unfrequently a white one. It is almost certain death to shoot the leader,

as the rest become frantic, and will attack everything that comes in their way. After the leader has passed, any number of his followers may be slain with impunity.

After another day's tiding and sailing, we reached the penal settlement. The establishment consisted of the Governor, a lieutenant in the Royal Navy, ten or twelve white and mulatto gaolers, and about three hundred convicts, all black and mulattoes. It is the *Agapemone,* or "abode of bliss," for all the convicts from the West India islands, and for British Guiana. I expect, from what I saw, that the convict's existence is not quite one of perfect enjoyment; but I don't doubt that the rascals deserve a great deal more severity than they get. A few days before our arrival, a plot had been discovered, by the confession of one of the ringleaders, which had for its most praiseworthy end the poisoning of the Governor and his subordinates, and the murder by other, and probably less merciful means, of all the remaining inhabitants, both male and female, of the establishment.

We were most hospitably received by the Governor and his wife, an Australian beauty of no mean pretensions, and of very ladylike manners. He very kindly offered us his boat for our ascent to the lily, and as it would require a day or two to select a good crew,—a very necessary requisite at this time of the year, when the river is ten or twelve feet at the least above its summer level,—he kindly volunteered to supply us with a convict crew for the next day, to paddle us up to the Falls of the Cuyuni, distant rather more than half-a-day's journey. Consequently, the next morning we started in a boat manned by

six good-conduct convicts, and steered by a gaoler armed with a most ominous-looking cutlass, which, however, I believe was more intended for cutting down bush-ropes than for cutting down niggers.

The Cuyuni, at its junction with the Essequibo, is some three or four miles broad, and the banks, as far as I could discern through the deluge of rain which poured upon us incessantly during the day, were pretty enough; but the South American forests, though varied and gorgeous to a degree on close acquaintance, are dark and monotonous at a short distance, more so even than a European forest, owing to the density of the bush-ropes and parasites, and the lack of any clearings or glades to relieve the eye. About 11 o'clock we brought up at an Arrawauk village, where we found six or seven huts tenanted by about twice the number of Indians. Their abodes are very simple, consisting of four forked sticks or poles of different lengths, which are placed in the earth at four angles. Within the forks of these sticks are laid four poles, which are afterwards covered with several others laid in a lateral direction, and over these are placed the leaves of the trooly. These leaves are perhaps the largest in the known world, each leaf being from twenty to thirty feet in length, and from two to three feet in breadth; they usually grow in clusters of ten or a dozen; each leaf is supported by a single stem, which arises immediately from the root, and becomes the middle rib to the leaf, running its entire length; two or three form a most capital roof, as they will exclude even equinoctial rains, and last for many years. We found some Indian women grinding cassava root and baking cassava bread; while three

or four men were swinging in their grass hammocks under the trooly lodges.

The women were in most perfect Lady Godiva costume, their whole wardrobe consisting of a homœopathic covering woven of small glass beads of different colours, strung on threads of cotton, and so disposed as to form most curious and ingenious patterns with their different colours. This elegant, though somewhat scanty robe, called a "queiou," is nearly as large as the two palms of a man's hand, and almost square, except that the upper side is rather narrower than the lower. Before the Europeans and beads came into use, the bark of trees and the web-like covering of a cocoa-nut or palm-tree, and before that no doubt the fig-leaf itself, were found equally serviceable. The women were very much prettier than the squaws of the North American tribes; they had beautiful hair, which was turned up in a twist behind, and fastened with some kind of rude comb, much in European fashion.

In the most civilized, as well as in the most savage state of society, the female part of the creation seem to place great trust in the proper adornment of their feet and ankles, as a means of gaining the admiration of the opposite sex. The Chinese lady of fashion, from her earliest childhood, undergoes the gradual torture of enclosing her feet in iron cases, and making the foot grow up the leg, and she who can show the smallest foot is considered the most attractive. The French women, who have without doubt no great natural pretensions to beauty of face or figure, owe no small portion of the success of the irresistible fascination of their appearance to the faultless excellence of

their *chaussure*. The Arrawauk ladies concentrate the whole of the science of their toilette in adorning their legs and ankles. Although they wear no stockings, they have two very light cotton garters, one above the ankle, the other above the calf; these are so tight as to make the calf of the leg bulge out almost like an orange. They likewise wear long strings of beads of different colours wound tightly round their ankles and calves; these ornaments, and a dab of arnotta or senna stuck on the forehead, and a needle or fish's bone stuck through the lower lip, (rather awkward!) constitute the chief weapons of attack employed by the Arrawauk and Carib belle for attracting the admiration of the other sex. The women, when quite young, are really rather pretty, and their figures (and one has the full opportunity of criticising,) not inelegant. This, however, is only when *quite* young, for a very few years totally destroys all their pretensions to beauty; and I know of only one more disgusting object in nature than an old Indian woman, and that is an old negress.

The costume of the men is equally as scanty as that of the women, the only difference being the substitution of cotton for beads. They paint and oil themselves to excess, and when in full dress ornament themselves with feathers in many ways. They wear caps or coronals of feathers, which are excessively graceful and even warlike; they consist of a circular band about two inches broad, rendered a dazzling white with some kind of chalk, and fastened round a wicker frame exactly fitting the head; round this are fixed a great number of feathers of macaws, parrots, &c., with some of the long tail feathers of

the former. Some of them anoint themselves with some glutinous substance, into which they stick feathers, literally tarring and feathering themselves. Both men and women have a determined propensity to intemperance, and a glass or two of "soapy" will obtain all that either have to bestow. The complexion of the women is that of a new penny; but I doubt whether, with an elegant figure, a brown skin is in any way incompatible with perfect beauty. Our Buck-mulatto (a cross between the Indians, who are called by the settlers "Buck" Indians, and the negro) told us there was a child to be seen in the village, belonging to one of the women, that was covered with hair like a monkey; but he said the mother was so ashamed of it that he thought he should not be able to persuade her to show it. The mulatto asked her, but she said it had gone up the country. However, after searching quietly about the huts, we discovered it asleep in one of the hammocks, carefully covered over and concealed. It was a male child about three years of age, and the whole of its face, except its nose and eyes, was covered with short soft hair like a monkey's. It had an aged unhealthy appearance, and was a very disgusting object. It would have been a lucrative speculation to have taken it to Paris or London. I make no doubt, a few bottles of rum would have purchased it. The curiosity of its hairiness was doubly wonderful, as the Indians have scarcely any hair whatever on the face or body, and what little they have they pluck out and destroy with the greatest care.

If Sir Walter Raleigh had seen this hairy babe, and on his return had said there was a race of men

that were hairy like baboons, he would have been accused of wilful lying, but still no man can deny that he would have had very good data for so saying and believing. He has been excessively derided and calumniated for his account of the race of Amazons that existed in Guiana; but although their existence has never been actually authenticated, even now the most enlightened travellers, Sir R. Schomburgh amongst the number, find it almost impossible totally to disbelieve the accounts of the Indians, who tell of a tribe of women who exist far in the interior, who are warlike, and who hold no intercourse with other Indians except for a month during every year, when feasting, dancing, and piwarree are the order of the day; that all the male children born from these temporary nuptials are given to the fathers, and all the females brought up by their mammas. How can we blame him, therefore, for believing a narration advanced on the credit of the inhabitants of a complete *terra incognita*, and which they persist in believing and asserting to this day?

We traded for several curiosities, and, amongst other things, I took a fancy to a ring cut out of some kind of hard nut, that one of the women wore on her finger. She was very unwilling to part with it, and said she could not do so without the consent of her husband; she went and asked him, but what he said I do not know. However, she gave it me; but just as we were leaving, she came and begged it back in such a fascinating way, that I had not the heart to refuse. The interpreter told me that she said her husband had given it to her, and would beat her if she parted with it.

I was rather disappointed in the Falls of the Cuyuni, as I was, however, with all the South American falls that I saw. It was the rainy season certainly, and they resembled "rapids" more than falls. I don't consider the falls of the Cuyuni very much finer than the falls of old Father Thames over the weir at Hampton or Richmond, though rather broader certainly. In fact, when we camped and ate our lunch, I fancied the scenery bore a strong resemblance to the river at Richmond, with

> "The isle of Eels, the isle of Eels,
> Where Mrs. Hopkins loved and sung,"

in the foreground. We descended the river to the convict settlement without any exciting incident, enlivened through a most pelting rain by the songs of our convict crew. One of the convicts was a Carib Indian, who was undergoing punishment either for killing or robbing, I forget which. I could not help sympathising with the wistful glances he cast towards his native forests. He could have escaped with ease, as could the others, but his fellow-Indians would have brought him back, there being an agreement between the English authorities and the Indians, to the effect that all runaway convicts are to be returned.

All the travelling in British and Dutch Guiana is carried on by water, through the innumerable creeks and rivers that literally cover those swampy lands. The boats used are large, covered, gilded barges, very similar to those following the Lord Mayor's barge on the Thames. They are double-banked, and have usually from ten to fifteen oars. The crews sing

almost incessantly, during the longest journeys, changing the time of their stroke with the time of the different songs. The song itself is a curious kind of recitative and chorus, or rather perhaps more resembling a clergyman beginning the response, and the congregation taking it up when he has half finished. Altogether, when gliding through the forests during the lovely nights, it has a very pleasing effect.

We were most kindly entertained at dinner by the Governor and his lady, and after dinner had some animated discussions on the subject of penal discipline in general, and solitary confinements in particular. He had been Lieutenant-Governor of the convict establishment in Norfolk Island, and the accounts he gave of the fearful state of moral abandonment amongst the convicts there were almost incredible. The authorities were obliged to issue orders to forbid any execution taking place in the capital. It was a constant practice for men who were sentenced to confinement for life, in sheer desperation to murder one of their fellow-prisoners, that they might once more visit the abodes and hear the hum of busy men, though only for a few minutes, on their way to execution. All executions were consequently ordered to take place inside the gaol, and this had the effect of stopping the murders. During dinner our conversation was interrupted for some time by a young vampire bat taking it into his head to flap right into the middle of the table: he did not gain much, however, by his visit, as he was immediately secured and popped into a bottle of spirits of wine, to be preserved as a curiosity. The

vampire bat, called by the Spaniards "perro-volador," or flying-dog, in consequence of its head being rather canine in appearance, is one of the most disgusting of all South American creatures. The small ones are about ten inches from tip to tip of the wings, but some of the largest kind are between two and three feet. During the day they hang in disgusting clusters under any deserted shed, or in hollow trees, but after dark they flit about in great numbers with a noiseless ghostly flight. The stories of their sucking the blood of men and animals when asleep, which I always imagined were fiction, are literally true. They suck all creation, but prefer human society. They make a small incision with their triangular mouth, without causing any pain beyond a slight prick, and suck their fill; but so greedy are they that, like the old Romans at their feasts, when they find they have *quantum suff.*, and have no more stowage, they disgorge and commence again quite fresh; thus the quantity of blood one of these midnight *sangrédos* will extract if undisturbed is very considerable, and in the morning the uninitiated traveller is horrified at finding himself and clothes and hammock saturated with blood, and, in consequence of the smallness of the incision, he frequently cannot tell what part of his person has been victimised. During the operation they keep up a fluttering motion with their wings, which has a soothing somnolent effect, and lulls the sleeper into a deeper slumber. If it fastens on a large vein, the loss of blood is sometimes serious. Horses and cows are cruelly tormented, and not unfrequently killed by these blood-letting vets.

CHAPTER XVII.

ASCEND THE ESSEQUIBO—VICTORIA REGIA—POISONS.

May 6th.—ALL our preparations being completed, under the kind direction of Mr. B., we embarked about 6 A.M. in a double-banked boat, with a crew of ten paddlers and two steerers; most of them were Buck-mulattoes, or, as I before mentioned, half Indian, half Negro, and a more lazy, drunken lot of scoundrels I had not met for some time. They reminded me, not in appearance, but in nature, of the half-breeds of North America. Our own party consisted of our five noble selves, a Negro bird-stuffer from Tobago, a small Badian boy, and a very respectable Buck-mulatto (employed as a gaoler at the convict establishment), that the Governor had kindly lent us to interpret with the Indians, and take charge of the spirits. Besides our boat we had a small dug-out canoe as a tender, manned by three mulattoes, and loaded to the water's edge with provisions for ourselves and crew. I fancy we ascended the Essequibo with greater comfort and plenty than did Sir W. Raleigh some two hundred years ago, when he attempted to penetrate by the Caroni and Essequibo rivers to the Lake Parima, the sands of which were supposed to be of gold, and on the shores of which lay the fabulous city of Manoa del Dorado, the

capital of that golden empire, where the highways were as much beaten as between Madrid and Valladolid.

What could have induced the Spaniards to suspect the natives of Guiana (an ignorant wandering race, without permanent habitation of any kind) of possessing a golden city, it is difficult to imagine; "the wish" must have been father to the thought, I expect. Almost at the same time that in the low land of Guiana—or the "Wild Coast," as Vasco Nunez, its discoverer in 1504, christened it—the Spaniards were hunting in vain for a city which one would imagine a moment's thought must have convinced them could not exist amongst a totally uncivilized race of beings, in the mountains of Peru, Gonzalo Pizarro, 1539, was seeking a great prince, who was said to be covered from head to foot with powdered gold. Certainly a man's reasoning faculties are not employed with much power on the probability or even credibility of narrations which he wishes to be true. Bouquer says,—"that the rocks in that part of the continent often wear the aspect of towers and towns; and some such rocks of mica, and talc, or schist, most probably occasioned this appearance, and gave rise to the story which the Spaniards, "half-froze" for gold, and ready to swallow any incredible relation that chimed in with their wishes, believed without inquiry.

After paddling up stream for about three hours we stopped to breakfast at an Arrawauk village. Our first attempt at cooking was not very successful, and we fared rather scantily; but our crew made up for our deficiency, and consumed piles of salt-fish and pork, that proved to me that the capacity for food

of the South American is not in any whit inferior to that of the North American Indian. We got our men off by ten o'clock, and by the judicious administration of frequent glasses of new rum, and promises of more in the evening, we screwed them up to within three or four miles of the first fall. It did not rain, but it poured, the whole day. The rain was so thick that we could sometimes hardly see the bank of the river. On a fair average I believe it rained at the rate of thirty-six hours out of every twenty-four! during our trip. Saw innumerable toucans and parrots. Camped about 5 P. M. at an Indian settlement, very prettily situated; the inhabitants were all out in the forest on a hunt, and apparently had no fear of being robbed, as all their small property, such as bows, arrows, clubs, cassava, &c. were left in their usual places. We slung our hammocks under one of the trooly-leafed huts, and then proceeded to prepare our dinner. We succeeded far better than in the morning, and made a magnificent hodge-podge of chickens, rice, potatoes, pepper, grease, &c., which if it had not been burnt would have been perfect. In the evening, as it had cleared up, we had a delicious bathe in the river; we dared not, however, swim out for fear of torpedos or alligators. After sunset the goat-suckers come from their dark haunts in the forest, and flit about in great numbers, skimming along the surface of the water and through the trees with a quick, noiseless flight in pursuit of flies; their note is very plaintive, and far from disagreeable. The negroes call one species the "ooroocoocoo," from its soft, plaintive note, which somewhat resembles that word. They fancy it is a bird of ill omen, and that it haunts the

chamber of the sick as the harbinger of death. It certainly does frequent the sick-room, but it is only from its being attracted by the light that usually burns on those mournful occasions. I believe the notes of some species resemble the "whip-poor-will" and "who-are-you" of North America; however, I did not hear them. After smoking the pipe of peace, and drinking the Queen's health in a glass of something potent, we slung our hammocks and turned in. I was awakened in the night by a sharp bite in the shoulder; horrible visions of snakes, scorpions, centipedes, &c. flitted before my half-awakened senses. I was half afraid to move hand or foot for some time, expecting to put my hand upon the moist, unpleasant body of some snake. However, after remaining perfectly still for some minutes, and feeling nothing moving, I took courage and commenced a diligent search; but finding nothing, I supposed it was only the abortive attempt of some vampire.

May 7th.—We got under weigh at seven, and ascended through very monotonous, dripping, steaming scenery till ten, when we halted for breakfast; got under weigh again about eleven, and then commenced the tug of war. The Essequibo for the next six miles is a continuation of falls in the dry season, but furious rapids during the wet; both ascent and descent are dangerous during the rainy season. At the time we ascended it, the river was twelve feet higher than usual. The men rather redeemed their character for pluck and exertion when we actually reached the rapids, and certainly the way we crept up, taking advantage of every small eddy and every sunken rock, was worthy of admiration. We were

often completely surrounded by boiling, surging water, roaring past us with such a noise as to render conversation impossible. Any mistake or want of nerve in either of the steerers might have been attended with unpleasant results. When we had advanced about a quarter of a mile the paddles were found quite ineffectual, and we had to rest our hopes of progression entirely on the daring of the boatmen in swimming from one rock to another with the tow-rope, and by that means dragging us up inch by inch. They were the finest swimmers I ever saw, stemming and diving through rapids where to my inexperienced eye death seemed inevitable. One very fine mulatto was very nearly going under; he tried to reach a point of rock some four or five yards ahead of us, but the torrent was too strong, and he was swept back and past the boat, and would have been drowned if it had not been for a young tree, which had grown in the bed of the rapid during the summer, and against which he was driven with frightful violence. There was one moment of deep anxiety as to whether he would be able to seize it, and have strength to hold on; however he did so, and by floating a rope down to him, his comrades were enabled to haul him up, not in the least frightened, but a good deal bruised. Some of the passages were so narrow that there was scarcely room for the boat to pass. Notwithstanding all the exertions of our crew, and unlimited supplies of new rum after every *mauvais pas*, as the Chamouni guide would have termed them, we were unable to advance more than three miles in about six hours, and were forced to camp on a small rocky island some two or three hundred

yards long, in the centre of the rapids. The rocky scenery about the falls is picturesque enough, but the grandeur of the scene was owing to the roar and rush of the immense body of water. I must confess I expected something much finer from the views I had seen, and the yarns I had heard of the grandeur, and the danger and difficulties, of the Falls of the Essequibo.

I heard rather a good story, showing that travellers' sketches, as well as travellers' stories, are not always to be trusted:—A certain traveller had written a book on British Guiana, and had engaged an artist to illustrate it. The artist sent in his drawings, and amongst others, one of the Great Falls, which are in reality about twelve feet high, but which he had made twenty. The traveller was horrified. "The Great Falls only twenty feet! that would never do;" and the artist had orders to make it sixty feet at least; and thus it appears in the book, a second Niagara, the admiration of those who have not seen the original, and the amusement of those who have.

We swung our hammocks between some trees, and, lighting a good fire, we cooked and consumed our accustomed hodge-podge, and retired to our repose, which we enjoyed undisturbed by the hundreds of bats that kept fluttering and wheezing round us. In camping out in South America, it is necessary to be very particular not to leave any part of the skin exposed, especially any part of the feet, as the vampire discovers it in a moment. During our trip, though the days were so moist, the nights were invariably fine,—a great comfort, and moreover

fortunate, as giving us a better chance of escaping fever.

The mosquitoes of the forests of Guiana, the "Devil's trumpeters," as the Spaniards call them, are not to be mentioned in the same year with those of the cypress swamps of North America: they cannot be of the same breed—they differ in nature as much as the strong energetic back-woodsman of the latter country does from the weak indolent native of the former; but although comparatively innocuous, and by no means so maddening as their northern brethren, their urgent and incessant attentions night and day were very annoying. There is an old saying in the tropics, that the ladies and mosquitoes have an instinctive preference for newly landed Europeans. It is undeniably true of the latter, but I am scarcely competent to give an opinion on the former case.

Our little island was covered with orchideous plants, and various eccentric shaped parasites of the most brilliant colours; and it would have caused acute anguish to any botanist in Europe, to have seen the reckless way in which we hacked and destroyed plants that in England would have been worth hundreds. Comparatively few of these rare plants have found their way into the Old World; as the most curious have no seeds, the whole plant must be transported, and when the barrels and cases they have to be packed in are opened, they are generally found useless. There was one water-plant that grew in great abundance in several localities; it was of the most brilliant scarlet I ever saw in my life, a colour I had no knowledge of before. I could not discover its botanical name, as, unfortunately, none

of our party were botanists; but our interpreter told me that the Indians use it to poison the vampires.

Amongst innumerable plants that excite one's admiration and wonder at every step in a tropical country, there is one called the "Sleeping Plant" that is remarkably graceful. Its leaves are set in pairs, and during the day they remain separate as two distinct leaves, but from sunset to sunrise they close so completely as to appear as if the two were but one; as soon as the sun is up they again open and resume their double form.

Although one loses a great many opportunities of instruction and amusement from the absence of some scientific companion in a trip like ours, yet science is such an engrossing pursuit, that, in travelling through a country like Guiana, (especially when time is an object,) where nature, both animal and vegetable, assumes such wondrous and attractive, you may almost say unnatural forms, unless the majority of the party partake of a scientific thirst, and are willing to give up a good deal of time to quenching it, the continual waiting whilst one or two of the party were sipping at the stream of knowledge might become very annoying, and would be certain to cause discontent amongst the unscientific majority. A determined sketcher tries one enough sometimes as a travelling companion, but a determined botanist, or ornithologist, would be unbearable, especially in a country where he would find something new every moment.

May 8th.—We left our little island at six, and continued the ascent of the rapids, which were much easier of ascent than those of the day previous.

During the whole of the day, innumerable flights of parrots and macaws kept crossing the river, screaming and shrieking in most discordant chorus. It is impossible for any one who has not been in a tropical forest, to form any conception of the ear-splitting clamour occasioned by the chattering of a flock of some thousands of these larger kinds of parrots. It seems as if the air was tenanted with legions of demons engaged in mortal combat.

It is a curious sight to watch the toucan, or bill-bird, in its flight. Their wings are very weak and small, and consequently their flight is slow and laboured; they seem to be over-weighted with their enormous bills, and they progress by a series of dives, getting lower and lower every time. The Indians say, that when they want to cross any of the rivers, they poise themselves on the top of the highest tree they can find, and from thence make a dive for the opposite side; not unfrequently meeting a watery grave, if the river is too broad.

About three o'clock our captain brought up along shore, and told us that we had arrived at the point of debarkation for the lily. We accordingly set out through the bush, accompanied by six or seven mulattoes, carrying our "dug-out" canoe. After a trudge of a mile or so through the bush, we came to a small creek, where the canoe was launched, and we proceeded a few hundred yards through a tangled and almost painfully feverish-looking swamp, when we suddenly emerged upon a small lake, the native habitat of the vegetable wonder—the Victoria Regia. The lake is about four acres, and is completely covered with the lily; it was in great beauty at the

period of our visit, as the flowers were in full bloom, but rather beginning to fade. There are now so many specimens of it in England, that most of the flower-loving public have seen it, therefore a description is unnecessary. The flowers were the size of a large cabbage or brocoli (head), and the leaves were from four to nearly six feet in diameter: they are strong, and would bear a good weight; a man might stand upon them, I have no doubt, if he were light enough! We cut off several of the flowers, and invariably found them all tenanted by some twenty or more large black beetles—I wonder whether this is the case with the plants grown in Europe? Altogether, I don't think I was so much enchanted with the lily as I ought to have been; and although I think a trip up the Essequibo or any of the tropical rivers repays one very well, I don't think the lily itself is worth the trouble. After we had gazed our fill, and cut leaves and buds, and tried to get seeds, we returned to the boat and canoed a few miles further to a large Carib settlement, where we intended camping for the night.

Directly we landed we commenced a very active trade, for all the feathered coronals, bows, arrows, blow-pipes, &c. of the settlement. The bows and arrows are excessively well made, and display a good deal of ingenuity, which is also the case with the blow-pipe. The blow-pipe is from eight to ten feet in length, and is made of two reeds, one placed within the other: the inner one is a reed of a bright yellow colour, perfectly smooth both inside and out; it has no appearance of any joints whatever; this is the barrel, and is placed within the other reed to give it strength and durability. The arrows are about six

or eight inches long, made out of the stem of the leaf of some species of tree, a palm I believe; they are very light, brittle, and pointed: wild cotton is fastened round the blunt end of the arrow, to make it fit close to the tube, and to steady its course, as the feathers do an arrow. All these arrows are dipped in the wourali poison, and in the hands of the Indian, whom necessity makes a good shot, they carry certain death to any of the feathered tribe at the distance of one or two hundred feet. The famous wourali poison—the smallest quantity of which is said to cause instant death if mixed with the blood—is chiefly made by the Macoushi tribe, and by them traded to the Caribs and Arrawauks. It has been taken to Europe and tested and analysed, but its effects have been found to vary considerably, according to its age and quality. As the Indians had a small jar of the paste, we thought it our duty to make *our* experiments as to its properties, for the benefit of the human race. We accordingly procured an unfortunate chicken, and wounded it slightly in several places with one of the poisoned arrows. It did not appear to feel the punctures in the least, and the only visible effect was giving it an inordinate appetite for some Indian corn, with which we had intended soothing its last moments. After watching our subject with scientific anxiety for about a quarter of an hour, and finding that successive punctures only induced a greater consumption of corn, we liberated the chicken, and made up our mind that in this case at least there would have been no great danger to a human being, if he had been grazed by a poisoned arrow. As Indians value the poison very highly, and are unwilling to part with it, I expect this was either

some old poison, or some mixture made to resemble it. The manufacture of the poison is rather a mysterious ceremony, and the components are much of the same nature as the witches' broth in Macbeth. I believe a peculiar kind of red ant, and the fangs of the labarri and other poisonous reptiles that generate and batten in the pestilential swamps of Guiana, are the chief ingredients of the wourali; though I should fancy the deadly compound owes the chief portion of its virulency to the various noxious and deadly plants, the "Strychnos conifera," and others whose names I forget, employed in its concoction. The Indians have another poison, called Hiarri, which they use for poisoning fish: it has no effect upon a human being, but when thrown into the water intoxicates the fish to a considerable distance, and in a few minutes they float motionless on the surface of the water.

Directly the Indians discovered we had any "soapy" or new rum, they all flocked round to beg some: the most conspicuous was a sort of christianised half-breed, who had lived at the Missionary station below for some ten or fifteen years, and had been sent up by the Missionary to reside with the Indians, as a good moral example. On our return we reported his conduct to the Missionary, who could hardly be persuaded of the truth of it, as he said the man always told him he could not bear the sight of liquor. It is thus that very often the prodigies of missionary labours, when freed from the immediate control of the mission, instead of showing a good example to their tribes, only engraft the vices of civilization on the ignorance and cunning of their former wild state.

One very pretty young Carib mother, with a mass of red paint and arnotta on her forehead, and a needle stuck through her under lip, was very importunate in her requests for rum, and latterly her steps became very unsteady, and she seemed to have considerable difficulty in supporting her infant. Our crew, by some means or another, whilst we were visiting the lily, I expect, got hold of our spirits, and got noisily drunk, to our great annoyance. We slung our hammocks in the hut of a poor Buck-mulatto woman, who had married an Indian, but he had left her the day before, after giving her a severe beating, and his place was occupied by legions of fleas, which together with the crying of some poor little infants sick of fever, and the halloaing and singing of our drunken crew, did not conduce to the soundest sleep imaginable. The Indians of Guiana are, I suppose, the mildest and most inoffensive of all the aborigines of the world; the different tribes never go to war with each other, and, except when drunk with rum or piwarree, quarrels are almost unknown. They have much milder dispositions than the Indians of North America; they treat their squaws and dogs better, and they have an extraordinary facility for taming and rearing wild animals and rare birds,—an undeniable proof of their kindly dispositions. At every Indian hut you find numbers of tame parrots, parroquets, &c., hopping about in perfect security and happiness. This is all done by kindness and early nursing. The squaws almost invariably feed the young birds and dogs from their mouths,—not a very pleasant idea.

Supposing the whole continent of America, both North and South, to have been originally peopled by

the same race—a fact, of which, after having spent several months with the natives of both portions of it, and marked the exact similarity of feature and form, I have not the slightest doubt—the effect of climate on the courage and energy of the human race becomes very evident. The only instance of any aboriginal tribe of the torrid zone maintaining its liberty is that of the Goahiros, who occupy the country between the Rio de la Hecha and the Lake of Maracaibo, a distance of some hundred and fifty miles. They are at this moment as wild and savage as were any of the Caribs that opposed the early Spaniards. They are governed by a cacique, and number about 30,000: they admit no strangers of any description into their land; but, as they are breeders of good horses and mules, they carry on a lucrative trade with their Spanish neighbours. The preservation of their country and independence is to be accounted for by their peculiar position, and the unhealthiness of the district, which offered no great attraction to the Spaniards, and prevented their being attacked, till they had acquired many of the arts of defence from their enemies themselves. All the other Indians, (except the Caribs, who made a short though gallant struggle,) from the tropic of Cancer to the tropic of Capricorn, succumbed to the Spaniards at once, and sank into abject slavery without a struggle. Mexico may be instanced in contraversion of this; but when one considers the mere handful of men who did conquer Mexico, and how few perished in actual fight, one can hardly fancy the opposition, except of numbers, to have been very energetic.

In the temperate zone, however, the Indians have

maintained their liberty though surrounded by enemies. The wild tribes inhabiting the plains of Chili, though early invaded and surrounded, still maintain their liberty intact; and to this day, mounted on swift steeds, and armed with long lances, they sweep across the pampas, destroying and driving into captivity the inhabitants of the villages, and the hatos. In North America, on the northern borders of Mexico, the enervating effects of climate are still more evident. There we see the Spaniards themselves, who subdued, without a struggle, the aboriginal inhabitants of the tropical countries, so morally and physically debased by climate, as, in their turn, to be preyed upon by the savage inhabitants of a more temperate climate,—themselves originally of the same race as the slaves they had so easily conquered. (What I mean is, that the Mexican Indians are the slaves of the Spaniards, and the Spaniards of the North American prairie Indians, who were originally the same race as the Mexican Indians.)

After breakfast (our men looking unnaturally pale and unwholesome after their night's amusement), we embarked our parrots and other curiosities, and prepared for the descent. We found, or rather our men found descending much easier work than ascending the stream. We descended about three miles of rapids in less time than it took to ascend three yards. The sensation was delightful, and it all appeared so easy, and such plain sailing, that I could not at all sympathise with the nervous looks of our steerers, and the anxious glances the crew would every now and then cast at the steerers. The fact was, that what appeared to be quite a clear deep

stream was in reality studded with rocks some ten or twelve inches under water, and to strike against any of these, going at the rate of twelve or fifteen miles an hour, would have ensured an upset.

In the dry season, when the rocks are uncovered, and the way plain, the navigation is comparatively easy and safe. However, our cup of enjoyment and *insouciance* arising from a blissful ignorance of the perils we were encountering, was dashed from us in the most unpleasant manner, by finding ourselves within an ace of going stern foremost over a fall of some ten or twelve feet into a seething caldron below, in the whirlpools and eddies of which most probably our unfortunate remains would have performed no end of circles, till some kind torpedo or cayman had consumed them. Any chance of swimming was out of the question. The facts were as follows:—The Essequibo, where it falls over the strata of rock, and forms what is called the Big Falls, is a mile and a half broad, and during the wet season they are only practicable close to the shore on either bank, where the bed of the stream is less precipitous. The centre of the fall is one mass of rock and broken waters, with a clear fall of about ten or twelve feet into a surge beneath, such as I said before the best swimmer that ever breathed could not live in for half a minute. We had descended cheerfully on the right bank, intending to shoot the fall on that side; but when we came within some five hundred yards of it, the bowman, the best man we had in the boat, who had been standing up and attentively watching the channel for some seconds, made a sign to the steerer (for the roar of the water prevented his

speaking) to turn, as it was impracticable; the boat was immediately turned, and we paddled up stream some distance, intending to cross over to the left bank, and try to shoot the falls on that side. Whether it was that the men had not recovered from their night's debauch, or that the steerer had misjudged his distance, or the strength of the current, I cannot say; but when we had got half-way across we found that the boat was being drawn down towards the falls with great rapidity, and that our only chance of reaching the opposite shore was in weathering a large rock, and getting into the back water formed by a small island near the centre of the stream, and some four or five hundred yards above the falls. The boat's head was kept well up stream, and the men worked for dear life, getting almost white with fear. For a minute or two there seemed some chance of our succeeding; but as the men became weaker we made less and less progress, till at length we found we were perfectly stationary, neither advancing nor receding an inch. It was rather a nervous moment, but it was of very short duration, for we soon had the agreeable sensation of finding ourselves descending slowly, though surely, stern foremost, our speed increasing every inch towards the falls.

Escape now appeared almost impossible; and we kicked off our shoes and coats, preparatory to a last, though evidently hopeless struggle; when just as we got into the broken water, and were within a hundred yards or so of the falls, an unexpected eddy, caused by a large rock some inches below the surface, which, in his fright, had escaped the notice of the cockswain, arrested our progress for an instant, and enabled one

of the men to spring on to the rock and check the boat, whilst the others also jumped out. The reaction was certainly great, and far from disagreeable; and for some minutes we forgot that though our transit over the falls was delayed for some time, there was not actually much hope of avoiding it, as in order to reach a place of safety we had to stem the stream that had before been too much for us. However, after resting some quarter of an hour, and administering strong goes of "soapy" to the paddlers, one of the men, the bowman afore-mentioned, tying the rope to his waist, in case the stream should be too much for him, sprang from the rock as far as he was able; and by dint of diving, and sticking his feet against the bottom, and swimming with a vigour that only a Buck mulatto striving for his life can swim, managed to reach another rock under water, some five yards or so up stream. Here, fastening the rope in some way, he managed to haul up the others, one by one, and they, in turn, hauled up the boat. This again was awkward work, as the rope was strained to the utmost, and I every moment expected it to part. Here we rested again, and administered more rum; and afterwards making points *d'appui* of the different rocks above us, and, thanks to the diving and swimming, and incredible exertions and daring pluck of our crew, we gradually crept up till we reached the rock that I mentioned we should have weathered the first time we made the attempt. Here we camped for the night, giving our exhausted crew an extra "go" of rum. This last "go," added to all the preceding "goes," had the effect of making some of them rather drunk; and the next day one of them

had a fit of the horrors. The next morning we were under weigh early. Shooting the falls in perfect safety on the left bank, we progressed steadily all day, and reached the convict station about 9 P.M., where we were most hospitably entertained on an excellent dinner of mypomi, or tapir, lobba, and wild turkeys.

May 11th.—Having again got the loan of our convict crew, we went to an Episcopalian Missionary station, called Partida Grove. It is beautifully situated at the junction of the Mazaroni and Cuyuni rivers. Mr. Bernaw, a Prussian by birth, who has spent fifteen years in the country, is at the head of it. It appears a flourishing settlement; and at the period of my visit there were seventy children, of the Arawauk, Carib, and Macoushi tribes, attending daily school. From what I had seen up the country, however, of the conduct of the pets of the mission, when removed from control, I am afraid that the influence exerted on the natures of the Indians is not lasting. In fact, Mr. Bernaw acknowledged that when they grew up it was almost impossible to retain any influence over them; they then generally return their Bible and other books, with many thanks, to the missionary; and doffing their civilized dress, in buff, or bare skin, return to their native forests, where very soon all that remains to them of the learning and morals instilled into them at the station are a few words of broken English, and an immoderate craving for rum. The Indian children at the station are most docile; in fact, almost too much so, as they display a total want of spirit. The Macoushi display the greatest aptitude for receiving instruction, and have not the same indolent pride as the Caribs. All

the tribes are slight-made men, with little stamina; and although many are apprenticed every year from the mission to different trades in Georgetown, not one in ten is able to bear the fatigue of regular work, and the rest either die, or are returned to their friends as useless.

The Indians are much given to an immoderate indulgence in strong drinks when they get the chance, and the means of inducing intoxication when rum is not to be had is very disgusting. The women make a liquor by chewing the cassava root and squirting the saliva into a large jar. When several gallons of this beastliness are collected it is covered over, and allowed to ferment; it is then fit for use. It is called *piwarri*, and has the same intoxicating effect as new rum; they drink it to great excess, but although the juice of the cassava root is rank poison, the fermentation must destroy a portion of its deleterious matter, as it does the drinkers no harm. The oldest women in the tribe are generally employed to chew for the public good, which rather looks as if the chewing itself was attended with bad effects. An experienced chewer from the Western States of America would have a fine opportunity for displaying science both in the chewing and expectorating line. The inhabitants of several of the islands that Cook visited, made fermented drinks in exactly the same manner. The piwarri feasts of the South American Indians seem to answer much the same end as the dog feasts of the North American prairie Indians; though whereas a fat dog is by no means bad food, and Hippocrates equals the flesh of puppies to that of birds, yet I cannot say I fancy indulging in

piwarri with much pleasure. Like the Sioux, they have their medicine men and medicine lodge; and their monotonous beating of tomtoms and shouting, and pinching and thumping the unfortunate patient, seem much the same; their singing also bears a very strong resemblance to that of their northern relations.

It is a remarkable fact, showing more than anything else the fatal nature of the climate of Guiana, that the Indians themselves suffer and die in great numbers from fevers and other diseases incident to the climate. The wet season, the time we were there, is most fatal to them, and in all the villages we stopped at we found several laid up with fevers. The land or south-west wind knocks them down in the same way as an east wind does invalids in England. But although the climate of Guiana is frightfully hot, and unhealthy, it is not so in nearly as great a degree as the climate of Guinea coast, lying in the same latitude. In the former country the prevalent easterly winds get tempered in their transit over the Atlantic. In Guinea, the same prevailing winds reach their coasts after being raised to fever and scorching heat in crossing the burning deserts of the interior. I do not suppose the wild tribes of British Guiana are disappearing faster at present than they have been for the last two or three centuries. There is no reason why they should,—there is no tide of emigration pressing forward and swamping them as in North America. They have no wars, either domestic or foreign. Game of all kinds abounds, and they are not exposed to the rigours and privations of winter. I do not suppose that an

Indian of Guiana ever knows what actual hunger or thirst or cold is; birds, fruits, water, and animals of all descriptions so abound, that he literally has only to stretch out his hand to get enough to support life. He requires no covering, and like a snail he carries the only house that is necessary for him, namely, his hammock, on his back. No Indian ever stirs without his hammock; sleeping on the ground in that snake-ridden country would be certain death. The British tars and the tars of other nations owe more than perhaps they are aware of to the natives of Guiana. Hammocks were unknown till the return of some of the navigators of those coasts, who finding them so much more convenient and cleanly than the old standing berths, brought them into general use. Notwithstanding all these advantages, however, the Indians are gradually decreasing. I suppose rum has something, but not much, to do with it. I should be more inclined to believe that they are exotics from a colder region, and as such, have never got thoroughly acclimatized. They have all the characteristics of exotics. They are short-lived and delicate, and a family of more than two or three is almost unknown.

We returned to the convict establishment for dinner, during which a servant came in to say a large snake was caught and was waiting outside. On going out we found a nigger with a boa of about ten feet long wound round his arm. It was not venomous, but very powerful, a pleasant fellow to have domesticated in one's garden, and to meet in one's drawing or bed-room. Next morning, after investing in all the tonquin beans and vanilla pods that we could procure, we embarked on board a wretched dogger,

laden with stores for Georgetown. The vanilla vine grows in abundance in Guiana, but the natives have not acquired the method of drying it properly and preparing it for the European market. It is very valuable when well prepared, each pod being worth from 1*s.* to 4*s.* Mexico is the only country where the curing of it is properly understood, and there it has become a most important article of commerce. The tonquin bean is much more common, and may be got in any quantities up any of the rivers. Its use in snuff is well known. Our miserable vessel swarmed with rats, which by way of recréation kept running over my head and face during the night, and ate up several small tortoises we were taking down as curiosities.

CHAPTER XVIII.

GEORGETOWN—SURINAM—PARAMARIBO.

We anchored off Georgetown about 10 P.M., and I was by no means sorry to find myself again in my comfortable berth on board the *Ariel*. The river Demerara is more infested by sharks than any river on the east coast of America, and it was currently reported that no man who had fallen overboard had ever been saved; however, that was not true, for three instances of men jumping overboard occurred whilst we were there, and all were saved. The current comes down at the rate of about four or five knots an hour, and when any dead sheep or oxen floated down you might watch the sharks tearing and worrying them like so many bull-dogs.

May 12th.—Strolled about the town picking up curiosities. Amongst others, got some specimens of the snake nut. This extraordinary vegetable wonder is about the size of a large walnut, and the kernel exactly resembles a snake coiled up. It is no imaginary resemblance, but is complete in every respect, head, tail, and body, and all the coils of its body, and as natural as possible. I forget the botanical name; but they abound in the upper country, and can be procured in any numbers. I don't know whether they are used as food, as I was not there during their season. We went to a ball at Government-house,

where were assembled the beauty and fashion of Georgetown, though I cannot say much for either.

May 13*th*.—A party, sixteen or seventeen of us, met at luncheon at the house of Mr. C——, a most hospitable, gentlemanly man. He is, on his father's side at least, of pretty good extraction. His father was the Duke of Kent, and his wife is the daughter of George IV.—a curious coincidence.

The luncheon was magnificent, but whether it was taking ice after port wine, or port wine after ice, or not taking the ice or omitting the port wine, I cannot say, but we were all very nearly poisoned, and the show at mess in the evening was very small.

Embarked on board the *Ariel*, and after passing a miserable night, got under weigh about 7 A.M. and stood for the mouth of the Corentyn river, where D—— had promised to call to pick up the son of the Governor of Surinam. A pilot had been lent us by the captain of a Dutch man-of-war schooner; the poor fellow was a slave, and though he worked desperately hard, scarcely allowing himself time to eat or sleep, yet I fancy we should have progressed nearly as well without him, for whereas he kept us coasting along in half two or three fathom water, and the coast shelves so gradually that even then we were out of sight of land—we should have stood out to sea and in again to fetch the mouth of the Corentyn. We should have been able to carry more sail, and moreover, not have had the misery of the lead continually going. I always imagined that the moment a slave entered an English port he was a free man, but such is certainly not the case at Demerara.

May 14*th*.—About mid-day we anchored off the

mouth of the Corentyn river, distant about six miles. Some of the party landed to pick up the son of the Governor of Surinam. About sunset they returned, and reported flocks of flamingos, pelicans, parrots, &c. Under weigh again for Paramaribo.

May 15*th*.—Bent along the coast, which was very low, and scarcely visible at the distance of six miles. We got into two fathom water, drawing eleven feet. Bumped two or three times as we went along: luckily the bottom was soft and muddy. If we had stuck fast it must have gone hard with the vessel, as there is always a heavy surf running, and the shore shelving so gradually would have rendered it difficult to get her off.

May 16*th*.—The ditto of yesterday without bumping.

May 17*th*.—Just before sunset we made the mouth of the Surinam river, but the wind failing us and the tide running down like a sluice, we had to lay on and off during the night. I should imagine the coast of British and Dutch Guiana must be as nasty a coast to make as any in the world. It is, as I said before, so low as not to be visible at the best of times at the distance of six miles, and when it is visible its assistance to the mariner at all out of his reckoning is very small indeed: it is unbroken forest, without a single landmark from the Gulf of Paria to the Highlands of Cayenne.

May 18*th*.—At daylight we tided it up to the city of Paramaribo, situated on the left bank of the Surinam river, fourteen miles from its mouth. The approach to Paramaribo is rather pretty, the houses very white, and the grass and foliage very green. Its position in the bend of the river reminded me slightly of the

Crescent city of New Orleans, only the Surinam is about twice as broad as the Mississippi at New Orleans. As we approached the town I was surprised to see such a collection of shipping, amongst the rest a frigate, two corvettes, and several schooners and steamers belonging to his Hollandic majesty. To my shame be it spoken, that before the question of visiting Surinam was mooted, I had a very indistinct idea as to its whereabouts, and as regarded its capital, Paramaribo, I had never heard the name till I arrived at Georgetown.

In the evening we called upon the Governor, a fine old soldier. We were very hospitably received, and were made honorary members of the club, where billiards and beer drinking seemed the most engrossing occupations. The next day, pending some arrangements for going up the country, we strolled about Paramaribo, our time pretty equally divided between imbibing immense draughts of beer with fat, fishy-eyed Dutchmen, and wondering at the extraordinary hideousness of the negro, both male and female. At Surinam I saw more of that awful disease, incurable leprosy, than in any other parts of the tropics that I visited. It is said to attack indiscriminately all the different tribes and people inhabiting the tropics, but I certainly have never seen an Indian or a white man afflicted with it. It is also said to be contagious; but although I inquired at Paramaribo, I could not hear whether there were any thoroughly authenticated cases of its being taken by a white man on record. Notwithstanding it is universally deemed infectious, and lepers are separated from the society of mankind.

In British Guiana there is a colony of three thousand lepers, collected from the different English possessions in the West Indies and the Main. At Surinam they are forced to retire into the forests, where they build houses and plant fields for their own use, and thus wear out a life of solitude. At Cayenne the lepers are sent to the island of Desirado. It is a curious fact that lepers are notorious for their longevity and *alacrity*. It is a great deal too loathsome a disease to describe particularly. It assumes different forms, and attacks different parts of the body. The most common form is "elephantiasis," and without exaggeration I can safely affirm, that one out of every three negroes, both male and female, at Paramaribo, are afflicted with it in some degree, some very slightly, others *trailing a leg* behind them as large as that of the animal from which the disease takes its name, and scarred and knotted like the bark of an old oak-tree. Frequently after admiring the fine eyes and expressive features of some pretty Quadroon girl, I have dropped my eyes and seen that the damning curse has spared neither youth nor beauty.

Paramaribo, like all other towns within the range of the putrid fevers, swarms with Turkey vultures, or *sopilotes*, as the Spaniards call them. They are the most loathsome and unclean of birds, and like the harpies of old, they emit an infectious smell, and spoil whatever they touch by their filth and foulness. They feed entirely on the garbage and filth of the streets, and in that respect are invaluable. You see them sitting by scores at the side of the drains and sewers, with drooping wings and closed eyes, so gorged and distended with their filthy feast as to be unable

to rise to their accustomed perch on the house-tops. At Paramaribo they are as numerous as sparrows on a fine day in London. They are protected by law, and a heavy fine is imposed for their destruction. I heard rather a good story about them at Trinidad. The English messman of some regiment that was coming into quarters at Spanish town, seeing some two or three score of what he supposed were turkeys pecking about in the barrack-yard, proposed to take them at a valuation from the messman that was leaving, an offer which was of course accepted; and the poor innocent victim did not discover his mistake till he was fined 5*l.* for destroying a turkey buzzard; and his excuse of killing it for mess was not considered valid.

CHAPTER XIX.

SURINAM—PLANTATIONS—SHOOTING—SNAKES—BALLS.

THE Dutch residents at Surinam keep very queer hours. They rise at five and take a cup of coffee, and transact business till twelve, when they breakfast on the strongest of meats and drinks. After breakfast a cigar; then turn into bed, regularly undressing and pulling on their nightcaps. They rise again about five, and take a cup of tea, which lasts them till supper at ten. About eleven they go to bed for the second time. It is the principle of the Spanish siesta exaggerated to suit the Dutch taste.

May 20th.—Having made arrangements for accompanying a Dutch planter up the river to his estate, at 6 A.M. we started from the yacht in a gondolian sort of boat, quite *à la Venice*, as our hospitable entertainer observed, pulled by sixteen slaves, who kept up rather a pleasing chaunt, varying in time with the length of their stroke. At about 9 A.M. we arrived at Dyckeldt plantation, and were welcomed with a heavy refection of cake, port wine, Hollands, and bitters. This continued till mid-day, when breakfast was announced. It consisted of all sorts of dishes strange to us Europeans, parrots' breasts *à la biftek*, parrot pie, roast acouti, roast mypouris, or tapir. After breakfast, when the West Indians had turned in for their siesta, we

went into the bush to try for monkeys, but with no success. Dyckeldt, and in fact all the plantations of Surinam, are worked by slaves, and our host took great pains to prove how much happier a negro is in a state of slavery than in a state of freedom. Slavery exists in no very mitigated form in Dutch Guiana. Although the importation of Africans is strictly forbidden, yet the slaves in the colony breed fast enough to supply the decreasing demand at a low price; an able-bodied negro, male or female, can be bought for 15*l.* or 20*l.* (a pretty negress will fetch a fancy price of course.) In the United States they would be worth from 110*l.* to 150*l.* Continually during my visit to Surinam, slave owners were trying to impress upon me the perfect state of felicity of their slaves, and the absence of all corporeal punishment. This continual cry of stinking fish awoke my suspicions, and on inquiring of an overseer, a German, one day, he confessed the whipping was severe and frequent. The cruelties of the old Dutch planters during the Maroon war, and the awful atrocities they practised against any slaves they captured, or even suspected of a tendency to rebellion, are perfectly incredible.

The Moravian preachers are allowed free access to the slaves, but I expect the latter can hardly appreciate the beauty of their doctrine, "that all men are brothers." It is curious that the Dutch should have been enabled to retain slavery in their small tract of country, when their neighbours on either hand, French and English, have abolished it. As I had visited in succession America, Cuba, and Surinam, I had a fair opportunity of forming a pretty correct opinion as to the nature of the bondage amongst the three nations.

In America they enslave the mind and intellect more than the body, and the degraded position of the slave is utterly hopeless, as no manumission can overcome the prejudice against his colour. In Cuba the actual manual labour of the slave is far more severe than in the United States, but the means of procuring his freedom are greater and more within his reach, and when he has obtained it, his position is a hundred degrees better than that of the American negro. The state of the slaves at Surinam is certainly the best of the three. This is owing both to the strictness of the laws regarding their treatment, which however are often evaded, and to the naturally kind disposition of the Dutch, and from there being rather an excess than a scarcity of slaves for the stagnating business of the colony.

May 23d.—A grand spread at Government-house. Nearly all the company, amounting to thirty, were *officiers de marine.* The only lady present was the daughter of the Governor. She was the widow of a colonel in the army, with the rank of Baron, and by Dutch etiquette she is forbidden to marry any one under that rank. Rather a nuisance to her, I should think. Smoking in the evening in drawing-room; a great lounge.

May 24th.—We were overcome with invitations to different dances, dinners, and all kind of festivities. We had one very agreeable dance at an American merchant's, where we had an opportunity of judging of the beauty of the ladies of Paramaribo. They are not pretty, most of them having a very strong tinge of negro blood; one figured in all sorts of queer quadrilles and country dances, to the great amusement

of the Surinam belles. Although the ladies were excessively *empressé* in their attentions to some of our party, I could not see that their lords and masters showed any kind of resentment thereat; and I think if the wife of Bath had tried the patience of a creole Dutchman, she would hardly have been able to boast that—

> "In his own grease I made him frie,
> For anger and for very jealousie."

For though I saw many respectable matrons seemingly trying to excite a feeling of jealousy in several remarkably stout gentlemen, their husbands, who would have fried to perfection, I could not see that they were in any degree successful. Altogether we had a most agreeable amusing party. There was a Quadroon lady called Sophonisba, the fattest, merriest, ugliest girl I ever saw. She could repeat a few English words and sentences without the slightest knowledge of their meaning, and not being in the least affected with shyness, she was continually making the most ludicrous mistakes. My enjoyment was rather marred by an untoward event, for which however I had only myself to blame. A busy old Dutchman, who should rather have been sitting on a well-sanded floor in some public-house of entertainment, smoking a long clay and drinking beer, than be capering about the room like a young hippopotamus, had "riz my dandon considerable" by continually getting in my way and stopping in full career *my* down the middle and up again. I had tried to look very fiercely at him several times, but met nothing but a dull fish-like stare of vacancy, which seemed to say,

"My heart 's in the pewter,
My heart is not here;
My heart 's in the pewter,
A drinking strong beer."

So at length losing all patience, and carrying my elbow well out, tea-pot fashion, I came tilt against him, aiming my blow at the most prominent part of his corporation. Whether I had not allowed sufficiently for the *vis inertiæ* of his massive body, or whether my pace was greater than I imagined, I cannot say, but the punishment was severer than I intended. My conscience quite smote me when, suffering acutely as he was and scarcely able to draw breath, instead of suspecting any malice *prepense*, he begged my pardon and hoped I had not hurt myself.

May 21*st*.—Being the Queen's birth-day, the *Ariel* was *dressed* at 12 o'clock, and a royal salute fired, which by agreement was taken up by the Dutch frigate; the *Ariel* then returned the Dutchman's salute, and D—— went on board to pay his respects to the commodore, regular man-of-war fashion. Afterwards we went some ten miles up stream to a plantation belonging to two Welchmen, where we had accepted an invitation to dine and drink the Queen's health. There were about ten present besides ourselves, all born subjects of her Majesty. A more drunken party, begging the pardon of those present, it has never been my luck to see. Our hospitable entertainers evidently thought that the best way of shewing their good feeling towards us was by making us tipsy, and the regiments of champagne and phalanxes of beer ranged round the room might have made the strongest head giddy. However, thank goodness, their

singing and excitement, to say nothing of innumerable drinks of gin and bitters imbibed whilst waiting for us, told on them sooner than on us, and we had the pleasure of seeing them caught in their own trap, and one by one carried off in a state of helplessness by the grinning slaves. It was a pleasure to us, because that was our only chance of escape, as any refusal to drink fair would have caused a quarrel immediately. At eight we again assembled for tea, and the fumes of the wine not having quite disappeared, a quarrel was soon cooked up between two planters, about nothing in particular, and being full of fight, we had great difficulty in preventing their fighting a duel across the table. However, the quarrel soon became general, and contradictions, falsehoods, and challenges were exchanged with drunken amiability. I was by no means sorry to find myself back on board the yacht about 7 A. M. next morning. If that was a specimen of planter life one cannot be very much surprised at the climate being slightly unhealthy.

May 25th.—Rode about the country, and went to a hop at a respectable tailor's.

May 27th.—Started at 2 A.M. in a tent boat for a plantation some four hours up the stream, where we had accepted an invitation to hunt the tapir or peccary, or any other game that might offer itself. We had all been exposing ourselves very much to the sun and night air, and it was a matter of wonder to the seasoned inhabitants of Paramaribo, who never went out into the sun without an umbrella, that we had not suffered severely ere this; however, it was beginning to tell, and we were all more or less feverish. We arrived at the plantation about six, and about seven started

in company with a Carib Indian and two or three Bush negroes and many dogs, for the forest. A very ludicrous incident happened to us shortly after starting. As the forest was some two miles distant and the weather terribly hot, it was settled that instead of walking we should embark in a dug-out, or a canoe hollowed out of a silk-cotton-tree, and be towed down one of the dykes that led in the direction of our hunting-ground. Six of us, sitting two and two, took our places in this frail conveyance, and a naked slave being produced mounted on a naked horse, the traces were fixed to the bows, and another naked negro being placed in the stern to steer with a paddle, the horse was started at full gallop, and away we went down the dyke at the rate of about twelve miles an hour. The dyke was about thirty feet in breadth, and, judging from appearance, fully that in depth. We proceeded safely enough for nearly a mile, though it was rather ticklish work, for it was evident that, with such a crank conveyance, unless the steerer kept her quite straight, a capsize was inevitable. At length, as bad luck would have it, after two or three false alarms, our steerer getting confused with the pace we were going, and our continued injunctions to take care made the slight mistake of bringing her bow right in shore in the place of keeping it out. When I saw that a capsize, as I thought, was inevitable, my first impulse was to spring out; but the instinctive feeling of sticking to the ship was stronger, and I held on like grim death, but did not move. My companion D—— alongside of me did the same; but the two sitting before us seemed to be seized with some simultaneous irresistible impulse, for directly the canoe's head was

turned in they both made a spring out, hoping to reach the bank, but one jumping on the top of the other, they both got a most complete sousing in the not over-clean water. Their sudden spring out seemed to affect our velocity or direction in some way, for although we ran stem on to the bank, it was not with force enough to upset the canoe or to shoot us out. This incident, although the work of a moment, afforded us amusement for the rest of the day, and was an excuse for a small modicum of brandy-and-water, which the heat made most palatable.

When we entered the forest the dogs were loosed, and they and the Indian and Bush negro commenced a very active hunt: all of a sudden one of the dogs gave tongue in a most energetic manner, and we all rushed through the bush, regardless of snakes and prickly pears, to where the grateful note came from; but when we got up we found a dog running round in a circle, either mad or in a fit, with the rest of the pack looking on, and occasionally giving tongue to encourage him I suppose. When the Indian came, he said he was afraid the dog was mad; but as he was a favourite, the owner would not hear of his being shot. The dog was very wickedly inclined, and evidently wanted to bite some one, but was puzzled and confused with the number. It would have been a very ludicrous sight for an uninterested observer, to have seen twelve men standing in a circle with twelve double-barrelled guns at full cock, pointed at a small dog in the middle. If he had made at any one in particular, murder must certainly have been committed, for the twenty-four barrels would inevitably have been discharged in the direction of the party attacked. After a time the

Indian secured him with a noose made of a bush rope, and he was sent away: however, our sport for the day was spoiled. We still persevered, however, and the Indian was reported to have seen a peccary, and pointed out to us a fresh track of a jaguar.

Whenever we went into the bush we suffered intense pain from the ants; they would creep up inside our trowsers, and attack us in all sorts of impracticable places, the back of the neck, and between the shoulder blades, before we knew there were any about us. I fancy the ants of the tropics are by no means the same plodding, saving insects that they are in Europe, but, on the contrary, rather a dissolute, gadding-about race. Their abodes are quite different from our domestic ants; they construct large, round, whitey-brown paper looking nests in the bark, or in the forked branches of the trees, and from these they form a kind of arched road, about half an inch wide, concave and rather flat: these covered ways will often extend from the foot of a tree to the height of some fifty or sixty feet. In the equinoctial forests nearly every tree is covered more or less with a certain vine called indiscriminately bush ropes, monkey ladders, or supple jacks. They reach the summits of the highest trees, and frequently bind neighbouring trees together with such power, that when one falls through age, or by a hurricane, it is stayed by the other. These ropes vary in thickness, from the thickest cable to the thinnest line. They are very porous, and contain a great quantity of the purest water. A couple of feet of three-inch rope will produce as much as a pint of excellent water. A stranger wandering in the woods might, through ignorance, perish of thirst, when around him was water enough to sustain legions.

The bush rope, when only divided in one place, produces no water whatever; in the same way that in tapping a cask nothing escapes till the bung is removed; so two divisions must be made in the bush rope, one below *first*, then one above. If the upper division is succeeded by one below, naturally the water has all subsided and none is found. Frequently quite close to the bush rope grows the *Lapindus saponaria*, the tree that produces the soap berry; two or three of these will produce as good a lather as the best soap, so that there is no excuse for dirty hands in the forests of America. These are only two of the anomalous shapes assumed by nature in this land of vegetable wonders, where cabbages grow at the summit of trees a hundred feet high; oysters are found living comfortably on trees, and milk is procured with as much certainty from the cow-tree as from any short-horn in England.

Nothing could exceed the beauty of the lights and shades in the portion of the forest where we were hunting; it consisted chiefly of the different species of palms, and the Cuba or silk-cotton-tree. You could sometimes see for a mile or so along the grass alleys, where the bright green was every now and then broken by a gleam of sunshine of such richness and intensity as only the tropics can produce.

The cabbage produced by the cabbage palm, which often grows to the height of a hundred or a hundred and fifty feet, is most delicious, either boiled, stewed, or as a salad. Its leaves are very white, and tightly compressed. As the cabbage grows inside the bark, the whole tree has to be cut down; after the cabbage has been extracted, the trunk is left exposed to the air, and in about three days it produces the groe-groe

worm, one of the greatest luxuries of the tropical *bon-vivants*. This delicious grub is about the size of a man's thumb, very white and fat, with a black head. Fried in butter, or spitted on wooden skewers they are said to be exquisite;—heaven save the mark!

The oysters I have mentioned are to be found hanging on the branches of the mangrove-trees, near Porto Cabello in Venezuela; and it is worth remarking that, although Pliny noticed the fact and was not doubted, yet that when Raleigh mentioned having seen them, he was laughed at. The excessive politeness of the ancients, who never sneered at anything they were not in a position to disprove, might well read a lesson to us of the present day, for certainly that feeling does not exist to any great degree amongst us.

It strikes me, from what I have seen and heard of the skill of the Indians of the forests of Guiana, that they are the most expert hunters in the world. Perfectly naked, even to their feet, and armed only with bows and arrows, and blow-pipes, they track their game noiselessly, but swiftly, and with as much certainty as a dog running a good scent. When one comes to consider that all this is over dried and rotting leaves and vegetation, when the ground is so elastic as scarcely to retain any impression, the fact becomes doubly wonderful. The North American Indians make their most successful hunts during the months that the ground is covered with snow; but the South American knows no assistance of that kind. The forests of Guiana are full of the most frightful thorns and razor grass, and other obstacles that render it extremely difficult for a European, defended as he is

by his clothes and his shoes or boots to make any progress. How the natives, without any defence whatever, manage to glide swiftly along, is most marvellous.

As the hunting was unsuccessful, we returned to the plantation, where we examined the stud and trophies of our host, who was a mighty hunter. He gave us a frightful account of the snakes of Guiana, but not worse than I had heard from everybody who knew anything about the subject. A few days before he had sent a negro to open some sluices on his estate, but as he did not return, he, thinking he had run away, sent another negro to look after him; the negro went to the place directed, and found the man quite dead, and swollen up to a hideous size. He was bitten in two places, and death must have been instantaneous, as he was not more than three feet from the sluice. They supposed that it was a bush-master that had killed him. The couni-couchi, or bush-master, is the most dreaded of all the South American snakes, and, as his name implies, he roams absolute master of the forest. They will not fly from man, like all other snakes, but will even pursue and attack him. They are fat, clumsy looking snakes, about four feet long, and nearly as thick as a man's arm; their mouth is unnaturally large, and their fangs are from one to three inches in length. They strike with immense force; and a gentleman who had examined a man who had been struck in the thigh and died, told me that the wound was as if two four-inch nails had been driven into the flesh. As the poison oozes out from the extremity of the fang, any hope of being cured after a bite is very small, as it is evident that no external application could have any immediate effect on a poison

deposited an inch and a half or two inches below the surface; the instantaneousness of the death depends upon whether any large vein is wounded or not. The bush-master when alarmed or angry emits a very strong smell of musk, and one day when hunting, our Indian came to a stop, and appeared anxiously examining in all directions; and on asking the reason from a planter who was with us, he said that he smelt the bush-master, but whether he was over head or under foot he could not tell. The labarri is equally venomous with the bush-masters, but flies from the face of man. The fangs of the bush-masters and labarri are much valued by the Macoushi Indians for the concoction of their famed wourali poison, but the risk of hunting them is too great, and they generally manage to make the poison sufficiently deadly without the fangs of the former.

After dinner several of our party were what is called "cut for snakes;" the operation consists of three or four small incisions being made with a lancet, into which some kind of preparation is rubbed, which is supposed to have the effect of preventing the snake biting the person so vaccinated; and we were told incredible stories of men who had been cut, handling the most deadly snakes with impunity. However, I don't think that any of our party who were cut had that perfect confidence, which I believe is more than half the antidote; and I expect that if a bush-master or a labarri had appeared suddenly amongst us, we should all have made the best of our way off; and I even am sceptical as to whether the snake would have been able to discriminate as to which of the party were vaccinated and which were not. I

could not discover what the vaccination matter was composed of. The old negro who performed the operation, feigned mystery, so most probably there was nothing in it at all. In the evening we went down to the river to see two or three Indian women and their children bathing. They all, even to the smallest child of about three years old, swam most wonderfully, and the young ones followed their respective mothers exactly like a brood of young ducks. They seemed to have just as much facility in swimming under water as on the surface.

I was shown a very fine stuffed specimen of the campanero or bell-bird. This bird is very rare, and difficult to procure; it is about the size and colour of a white pigeon, with a kind of black crest on its head. In the crest is contained a species of trumpet, connected with the mouth, and through which it emits its bell-like note. It is the only bird that does not rest during the intense mid-day heat, but it is then, when every other sound is stilled and perfect silence reigns through the forest, that the bell-bird may be heard tolling at an interval of every three or four minutes.

During our various excursions through the equinoctial forests, I don't think there was anything I was more anxious to hear than the note of the campanero; but though several times we fancied and persuaded ourselves that we heard it, it was at such a distance that the effect was almost destroyed. Its note, which resembles that of a silver-toned bell, may be heard at a distance of two or three miles. It is found in the equinoctial forests of Africa in much greater quantities than in South America, but whether it is identically the same species I cannot say.

20th.—About 4 P.M. a party of twenty-five or thirty ladies and gentlemen came off to partake of a cold collation on board the *Ariel*, and when the champagne had had its proper effect, the old fiddler was called up, and dancing was commenced, which was kept up with great spirit till past midnight. It was what soldiers in the West Indies call a regular "pinch and tickle party." After escorting the ladies in triumph to their several abodes, and singing "Auld Lang Syne" frantically through the town, to the great wonder and astonishment of the Paramariborians, we bade a long last adieu to Surinam and its inhabitants, and embarked, and at daylight were under weigh and tiding it down the river. We had altogether a very enjoyable trip to Surinam, and were most hospitably entreated by the inhabitants, both male and female. I can recommend it strongly to the notice of any man who meditates suicide, and prefers dying of hospitality and high-feeding, and a very fair proportion of liquor at other people's expense, to jumping off London Bridge or the Monument. Paramaribo is a much cleaner town than Georgetown or Barbadoes, and as a residence is much preferable. The climate is drier and more free from fever; that is very much owing to its being fifteen miles up instead of at the mouth of the river. It is not nearly such a flourishing colony as formerly, when it belonged to Great Britain, but still it is rich, and by the introduction of steam and other sugar-making improvements, might become much richer. We left Surinam just in time, as we all had the seeds of cold and fever in us, which a longer residence there would most probably have ripened. At Paramaribo all the old residents look

back to the time when the colony belonged to the English, and English regiments were stationed there, and wish the time would come again. Although we had taken five days in beating up from Georgetown to Surinam, having both the trade wind and a current of about fifty miles a-day against us, yet we ran down the same distance in a day and a half. We brought up at the light ship, off the entrance to the Demerara River, at daylight, and after depositing two of our party, we stood in for New Barcelona, intending to touch at two or three islands in the way. As "Sola" was an island marked as of respectable size in the chart, D—— determined to visit it; it lies a little to the north-east of the Testigos. We sighted it on the third day, but to our great disgust found that it was nothing but a low bare rock, tenanted by boobies and other sea-birds, without an herb or shrub of any description. There is no doubt that enormous treasures have at various times been secreted by the pirates and buccaneers in many of these barren and desert islands, and still remain to enrich the happy wight who may find them. On the Spanish main to this day they tell stories of fishermen becoming suddenly wealthy, and circulating mysterious old coins of an age gone by, but I have never heard of any authenticated instance of a treasure being found.

CHAPTER XX.

VOYAGE TO MARGARITTA—NEW BARCELONA—LA GUAYRA.

BEING disappointed in Sola, we stood for Pampatar, the chief seaport of the Island of Margaritta. As a seaport it does not occupy a very high position, the number of mud-huts around the bay being about ten, and the number of inhabitants about twenty, and not a single boat of any description to be seen. Margaritta is a fine mountainous island of some two hundred miles in length, by fifty in breadth: it is said to be well stocked in its mountainous districts with game of every description, but we had not time to prove the truth of the report. The island belongs to the Venezuelan Republic, and was the scene of much fighting during the War of Independence. We landed to shoot rabbits, of which there are numbers in the sandy hills that border the coast; we saw no rabbits, but might have shot any number of humming birds and parroquets and iguanas. Margaritta produces the finest specimens of the tribe of cactuses in the world; they form a thick forest of trees, some of which are from thirty to forty feet high, with trunks three feet in circumference, and spreading branches. As all our shooting lay amongst such disagreeable

cover, we were rather in the pursuit of pleasure under difficulties. The spikes of these cactuses penetrated our shoes and some buckskin inexpressibles I had put on expressly, with as much ease as they would have done the thinnest tweed. The pain of the puncture is not only very acute at the moment, but as the extreme end of the spike invariably breaks off and remains in the flesh, every prick becomes a bruise, and not unfrequently a sore. There are some places, called by the natives Tunales, where the large species of cactus grow close together, that are perfectly impervious to man or beast: a thicket of this nature would form the most perfect *chevaux de frise* in time of war, as no army could attempt to penetrate it, and moreover no pioneers could approach near enough to cut it down till every branch and spike had been first removed. The dry arid sands on which these cactuses grow are the favourite haunts of the rattle-snake and cobel, and other venomous creepers that come there to deposit their eggs. I saw several snakes, but my little Guay-guerian guide would not allow me to touch them, as they were "muy mala." The inhabitants of Margaritta are a fine tall race of men, a cross between the Spaniard and the Guay-guerian Indian, but though retaining more of the characteristics and appearance of the latter, speaking the language of the former. The iguanas, which I before mentioned as abounding in all the tropical regions, are very disgusting looking objects; they are about three feet long from the head to the end of the tail; the skin is covered with small thin scales, and is of a dull brown colour, variegated on the back and sides with bluish streaks; the back

and tail are formed into a high serrated edge, the skin under the throat hangs loose in a disgusting looking sort of bag, their teeth are very sharp, and their bite is deep, but not venomous; their flesh is like chicken, and much esteemed by the natives and foreigners.

June 5th.—Stood away for New Barcelona, and made the mainland of the republic of Venezuela about the mountains of Cumana. The name of Venezuela, or Little Venice, was given to this part of the continent by Alonso de Ofeda, in 1498; he landed at a village near the mouth of the Orinoco, which consisted of twenty-six huts built upon piles, which reminded him of Venice—there is certainly great advantage in a lively imagination. The sail from Pampatar, keeping close to the precipitous coast of Cumana and amongst the Caraccas Islands, was very grand. About 7 P.M. next day we dropped anchor off the entrance to the Rio Neveri; we were soon boarded by a *guarda costa*, or a pilot-boat, I am not very clear which. Although perfect masters of Castilian, we were not *au fait* at the colonial dialect of the moustachioed individual who boarded us: he evidently looked upon us as most suspicious characters, and the yacht either as a resuscitated pirate or a man-of-war; they would have much preferred a visit from the former than the latter. There is nothing the small South American republics have such a dread of as an English man-of-war. They have an idea, which is a pretty correct one I believe, that they are never honoured by a visit of that description except for the purpose of collecting some small loan, of which, as it had quite escaped their memory to pay up

the interest, they fondly imagined the lenders had been equally oblivious about the capital. The Venezuela Republic has recent reason for dreading the approach of any man-of-war, for not many years ago Captain De Courcy, in a small schooner of one hundred and eighty tons, made a descent upon the coast of Venezuela for the recovery of some government loan. After blockading Sta. Martha, in which port was lying the whole Venezuelan fleet, (consisting of the flag-ship, a brig of five hundred tons, and three smaller steamers,) for some days, and sending in his ultimatum, he at length stood into the harbour and attacked the flag-ship. The first discharge of his long eighteen pounder through the stern window killed the admiral, who was adjusting his neckcloth before a looking-glass, and twenty men; when the colours were immediately hauled down. Captain De Courcy then attacked and captured the whole fleet one after another, and putting prize crews into them, bombarded the town and fort, and having thus accomplished his mission, he sailed for Jamaica, where he arrived with the whole Venezuelan fleet as prizes. At present his name alone on the north coast of South America is sufficient to bring any refractory republic to the most amicable humility. The gallant Venezuelans having been thus deprived of their wooden walls at one fell swoop, are naturally very suspicious of any vessels of war that make their appearance on their coast.

During breakfast we were boarded by five Danish Jews from St. Thomas; they all spoke English, and promised to be on the look-out for us to show us the lions of Barcelona. About ten we started in the whale boat up the Rio river for the town. Barcelona

is situated on the left bank of the Rio Neveri, some six miles from its mouth. The river has a most tropical and feverish appearance; the woods seemed alive with parrots, parroquets, and other rainbow plumaged birds, and the iguanas were basking in such numbers on the trunks and in the trees, that I am sure, if we had been so inclined, we might have killed two or three hundred; some were of the brightest green I ever saw. The Rio Neveri is full of crocodiles, and we saw great numbers both in ascending and descending; we very nearly succeeded in killing several, but unfortunately not anticipating any game, we had not brought our guns, and had only the boat-hook wherewith to attack them. The town of Barcelona is a ruinous-looking abode of misery and filth; it was destroyed by the terrible earthquake of 1812, but afterwards rebuilt; but it was again burnt and sacked and bombarded several times during the War of Independence.

The prosperity of most of the towns on the Spanish Main depends entirely upon their commerce with the West Indian islands. The change, therefore, that has so cruelly affected the West Indies, has been equally severe in its effects on New Barcelona, and other Venezuelan towns. Thousands upon thousands of oxen, mules and horses were, in the palmy days of the planters, annually shipped from the mouth of the Rio Neveri to Jamaica, Barbadoes, and Cuba. Now, I suppose, not one hundred of any kind are exported during the year. From its situation, Barcelona is peculiarly well fitted for the cattle trade. The port is only three days' journey from the *stanos*, or plains, and the beasts can be shipped with little

trouble and risk. The stanos of Columbia extend from the mountains on the north coast to the banks of the Orinoco, and produce cattle of all descriptions in as countless numbers as the Pampos of Buenos Ayres.

During our walk through the town we met some of our Jewish friends, who offered to show us the town and its beauties—I mean architecture of course! However, there was nothing of very great interest, and the sun being very hot, we did not persist very long in that most questionable of all enjoyments, sight-seeing.

We called upon the Governor, a tobacco and fever-dried little gentleman, who was very civil, and wished to introduce us to General Monages, the ex-President of the Republic, who was a native of Barcelona. General Monages was taking his siesta when we called; however, his wife would not suffer us to go away till he had seen us. After waiting a short time, he appeared, and greeted us with great apparent cordiality. He ordered up some champagne, and we pledged each other in form. He is said to be the most cruel, tyrannical old ruffian in the Republic, and has committed more atrocities than most men. If that is his character, his countenance does not belie it. He gained the presidency by a revolution; his brother is now president; and his enemy, General Paes, is an exile in the United States. However, Paes is by far the most popular man of the two, and the chances are that ere long their places will be reversed, or that Monages will repay with his head for the present triumph.

The presidents of Venezuela ought legally to be

lected for four years; but in nine cases out of ten, a revolution supplants them during their first year's holding of office. When a South American talks of war, he always specifies whether he means the "guerra political," such as the monthly or yearly revolution, and which are not attended with much bloodshed, or the "guerra al muerte," such as the War of Independence; the former are rather like fights at school, where the pugilists make an agreement not to hit in the face.

During our walk, the Governor took us to the ruin of an old convent, that was remarkable as having been the scene of a very obstinate defence of the patriots against the Spanish troops. It certainly had every appearance of having been pretty well riddled with grape and musketry. The little General warmed to his subject, and got quite eloquent in his description of the glorious behaviour of his fellow-countrymen; and finished by saying, that they were fighting in blood up to their knees. This sounded very fine, and we expressed signs of admiration and surprise, and well we might, for the ground on which the convent stood inclined at an angle of forty-five, and how the blood stood so high was rather a mystery.

Tyrannical as the government of old Spain towards her South American colonies undeniably was, it was not half so destructive to all energy and improvement as the ruinous effects of yearly presidents supplanted by annual revolutions; and under its blighting effects, the territory of Venezuela, one of the most beautiful and highl-favoured lands under the sun, has sunk from comparative wealth and prosperity to abject misery and ruin; and it is still

sinking lower every year, under the constitutional management of every fresh tyrant. Venezuela, however, is not a whit worse than all the other South American republics, including Mexico. The tyranny of one man over a whole nation, however galling and severe it may be, can never be so intolerable as the tyranny of a majority over the minority, particularly when the former feel that their power is only transient, and that no time is to be lost in revenging the annoyances and injuries received from their opponents, and feathering their nests for the future.

This is the case in all the South American republics, where it is not the constant change and the individual tyranny of a yearly president alone that is ruining their country, but the much greater calamity of one great party in the State continually trying to supplant and destroy the other at all hazards. All the foreigners tell over the same story, and say, that so great are the natural advantages of climate and productions of this portion of America, that if there was a government, however severe and unconstitutional, that had the will and the power to ensure protection to capital and investments, and to save the country from the uncertainty attending on constant change, Venezuela would become one of the richest countries of the western world.

In visiting the cathedral with the General, he gave us some account of the miraculous endowments of a few of the Barcelona saints. However much I felt inclined to smile at the idea of one waxen image being able to cause rain, another to cure a toothache, and a third to prevent shipwreck, one glance at the mocking smile on the face of our Jew companion quite checked any disposition of the kind.

Just as we were starting in the whale-boat to go down the river, some men who were dredging in the river brought up a brood of young crocodiles, from one to about six inches long. We took them with us to the yacht, where they were inserted into bottles of spirits, to be shown as curiosities in another hemisphere. Our party from Barcelona to La Guayra was increased by a Jewish merchant, that D ——— had kindly given a passage to; he was neither amusing nor instructive.

The coast from Barcelona to La Guayra is remarkably grand, especially the last twenty miles, when the mountains of the Silla, or Saddle, and the Sierra de Avila, rise up perpendicularly from the sea to the height of eight or nine thousand feet. When I say perpendicular, I really mean it. There are scarcely two or three hundred yards flat ground between this mighty wall and the ocean; and the slope of the mountain, according to some scientific calculations, is 53½°. Owing to its peculiar position at the foot of these rocky mountains, which never get thoroughly cooled, but radiate more or less caloric continually night and day, and owing to the sea breezes being little felt, La Guayra is, without exception, the hottest place in the western hemisphere; beating the Havana and Vera Cruz by several degrees. In addition to its character for being the hottest place in South America, it has another notoriety not less unenviable. La Guayra was the first place where that scourge of the tropics, the *vomito prieto*, or black vomit, was first experienced in the year 1790. Since that time it has spread in the shape of an epidemic over all tropical America and

the West Indies. Except from the excessive heat, I can see no reason for the unhealthiness of La Guayra, as there are no mangrove swamps nor anything to produce miasma in the surrounding country. We landed in the evening, and with some difficulty passed our traps through the Custom-house, and made arrangements for sending them up to the city of Caraccas that night, intending to ride up the next morning.

The bay of La Guayra is infested with sharks; but, singular enough, they never attack a human being; and the negroes and mulattoes that are employed to load and unload the vessels, swim and wade about with perfect impunity. The La Guayrans say, that one of the first Roman Catholic bishops that arrived from Spain was upset in the bay; and to reward the sharks for having respected one of the dignitaries of the Church, he gave them his blessing, and since that time they have never injured a true Catholic; but if a heretic, like one of ourselves, had fallen in, the sharks would have discovered the difference in a moment.

We spent the evening with a Spanish merchant and his very pretty Spanish wife. We heard a good deal about the recently discovered gold fields of Apaca, near Angostura, on the Orinoco. The gold is discovered in great plenty; but the climate is so fatal to Europeans, that all who had gone to gather wealth, had lost that much more valuable commodity, health.

CHAPTER XXI.

RIDE TO CARACCAS—VALLEY OF CHACAO—EARTHQUAKES.

Next morning at daylight we started on three mules for Caraccas. As the road over the Silla to Caraccas is the only one leading out of La Guayra, and consequently we could not well lose ourselves, we took no guide. The ascent is very precipitous, and the road rough and narrow, but the view of the boundless ocean on the one hand, and the magnificent range of mountains on the other was very grand. The road rather reminded me of the Great St. Bernard, though the resemblance would not bear analysing. The sensation of rising gradually into cooler stratas of air was most delicious; and at length being suddenly enveloped in a cloud, I felt actually cold, (a novel sensation I had not experienced for several months,) and was not at all sorry to put on my jacket. There is no mountain in the tropics where you rise so immediately and suddenly from the stifling heat of the Tierra Caliente, to the delicious temperature of an European sunrise in spring, as the Silla de Caraccas.

On the road from Vera Cruz to Mexico, when the

traveller arrives at the height of 4,000 feet, beyond which the fever never spreads, he is upwards of thirty miles from the sea; whereas, on the road up the Silla at that height, the ocean lies immediately at his feet, and he looks down upon it as from a tower. So perpendicular is the face of the Silla towards the sea, that any large *boulder*, or mass of rock, becoming detached high up the mountain, and bounding down its face, would fall clean into the ocean. About half-way up the mountain we crossed a deep cleft in the mountain called the Salto, on rather a ricketty old drawbridge. The bridge is commanded by a ruinous old tower, called Torre Quemada, or the Burnt Tower, a name it derives from its being placed just at the height where the traveller, descending to La Guayra, first encounters the stifling exhalations from the Tierra Caliente. About nine o'clock we stopped to breakfast at La Venta, an inn some 5,000 feet above La Guayra. Here, in a perfectly European atmosphere, we lay out on the grass, and gazed down upon the ocean and the town of La Guayra; we could just distinguish the *Ariel*, looking the size of a walnut-shell, hoisting her white sail, and standing away for Porto Cabello, where we were to meet her, unless we returned to Trinidad *via* the Rio Apuce and Orinoco.

After a regular Spanish breakfast of chocolate and fried eggs, for which, in as regular Spanish custom, we were charged about ten times the proper amount, we continued our ascent, and gained the seat of the Saddle, a hollow between the two peaks, called the Pummel and Croup, about ten o'clock. The summit of the pass, called Las Vueltas, is a smooth un-

dulating grass-land, somewhat like the sheep-downs of Sussex. The bold rocky peaks on either hand, stretching in a serrated ridge as far as the eye could reach, were very fine. I could scarcely fancy myself to be only ten degrees north of the equator, and actually on, or rather only 8,000 feet above the isothermal line of greatest heat, which passes through Carthagena, La Guayra, and Cumana.

We had left far below us all the tropical flora, and were amongst English ferns and English blackberries; and I actually discovered one familiar friend, a dandelion. From the summit of Las Vueltas you first get a magnificent view of the valley of Chacao, lying some 4,000 feet below you, with the city of Caraccas in the centre of it. I don't think the view from that height is so fine as some thousand feet lower down, where it certainly beats any view I have ever seen. It is finer in my opinion than the first *coup d'œil* of the Vega and city of Grenada from the Ultimo Suspiro del Moro, where the degenerate Boabdil el Chico both in mind and body, turned to take one last fond look at the luxurious abode of his chivalric ancestors, and wept bitterly, though too late, at his own cowardice and duplicity, which had almost without a blow surrendered to the "curs of Nazareth" the splendid heritage of nearly seven centuries, and which was never but in imagination to return to the true sons of the Prophet. It is also finer than the valley of Chamouni or Martigny, from the Tete Noir, but I think it bears more resemblance to the Vega of Grenada.

The valley of Chacao is about thirty miles in length, and some nine or ten in breadth. It is,

I should think, the most fertile spot in the world, producing in equal profusion the grains and fruits of Europe, and the sugar-cane and plantain of the tropics. The valley is well watered by the Rio la Guayra, which meanders through the centre. We descended the mountain leisurely, enjoying the glorious view, and did not arrive at the city till mid-day. We put up at an excellent inn, kept by a Frenchman who had married an Englishwoman. Here, as in all the other towns and villages we put up at in Venezuela, we were equally surprised at the excellence of the posadas, or inns. You might travel from one end of old Spain to the other without finding anything to be compared to them, either as regards cleanliness, or the civility of the landlords.

Caraccas is a large straggling town, with broad streets running at right angles to each other. It has rather a ruinous appearance, which is owing to the total destruction of the city by an earthquake in 1812. I suppose that since the days of Sodom and Gomorrah, no city was ever visited with so sudden and so sweeping a calamity. It was in the afternoon of Ascension-day, the 26th of March, 1812, when the greater part of the population were collected in the churches, that the first shock was felt; this ceased, and the terrified inhabitants were beginning to breathe, when suddenly a subterranean rumbling, far louder than thunder, even the thunder of those stormy regions, was heard, and the crust of the earth rose, like some huge bubble, to the height of several feet; nothing could resist the undulating motion of this fearful excrescence, and when it subsided nine-tenths of the city of Caraccas were levelled with an

awful crash to the ground, and 12,000 out of a population of 40,000 buried beneath the ruins. Happy were those who perished outright. The prolonged misery and agony of those buried beneath the ruins was frightful. All the water-pipes had been destroyed, and the wells filled up, and no water could be procured, save from the river. All the necessaries and comforts for the wounded were buried beneath the ruins. There were no beds, no surgical instruments, and no shelter, as none of the houses that were left standing were safe. I believe that since that awful visitation, no shocks have been experienced at Caraccas; but during the period I was there, and the rains were unusually late, the inhabitants were getting very much alarmed. However, before we left the country, I am sure rain must have fallen in sufficient quantity to have satisfied the most nervous.

In the evening we had an animated discussion as to our route, and the practicability of crossing the plains to the Angostura, and the Orinoco. As is always the case in discussions of that nature, every man's information and advice was perfectly different from his neighbour's. The Spaniards themselves knew absolutely nothing of the country twenty miles beyond Caraccas. However, we were fortunate enough to meet the English Vice-Consul at Maracaibo, a very agreeable man and a determined sportsman, and from him we got the desired information. He told us that the rainy season had not yet commenced, though it was some weeks later than usual, and was to be expected every day; and that if when we got to Valencia, some 200 miles to westward, the

weather continued fine, we might ride to Pao, on the Rio d'Apuce, and there procure a boat or canoe of some kind, and descend that river to its junction with the Orinoco, where we should probably get a steamer to take us down to Angostura. He assured us that riding across the stanos at this season would be madness, for if the weather remained fine, the continued drought must have so dried up the springs and streams, that we should suffer excessively from the want of water; and that if the rains set in, which they were almost sure to do during our ride across the plains. (as it took fourteen or fifteen days to accomplish,) we should be half drowned, camping out every night with no kind of shelter, and could not possibly escape fever and ague.

Consequently, acting on this advice, we hired four mules and a mozo to convey us and our baggage to Valencia. The next morning we promenaded the town, and visited the market; the shops seemed remarkably good, much finer than any I had seen in America since leaving New York. They are much larger and more open than those at the Havana. The saddlers' shops especially were very fine, and one saddle and accoutrements was shown us, valued at 300 francs = 60*l*. The market is the best I ever saw. Prime beef at a halfpenny per pound. The annual consumption of beef amongst a population of forty thousand is in a much larger proportion than can be quoted of any other city in the world. I regretted we were not there during the fruit season, when the market displays all the delicacies of the torrid and temperate zones. In the same stall you see the potato, strawberry, apricot, apples,

and nearly all the fruits and vegetables of Europe, heaped along with the plantain, the orange, the sugar-cane, and all the most ultra-tropical productions. I can fancy nothing more delicious than the climate of the valley of Chacao. It is a perpetual spring. Snow is never seen, but every now and then storms of hail fall, to remind the fortunate inhabitants of that luxurious climate that there are such things as frost and snow, and regions not quite so blessed as theirs.

All the early Spanish writers were very enthusiastic and glowing in their descriptions of the New World; this was partly on account of its actual perfection, and partly in consequence of its resemblance to their own Spain. One old bishop maintained that in the valley of Chacao he had actually discovered the garden of Eden, and compared the four small streams that watered it to the Pison, Gihon, Hiddekel, and Euphrates. As far as climate and scenery are concerned, it certainly is an earthly paradise. I believe the society at Caraccas is very good, and that literature and the accomplishments of music and drawing are more patronised than is usual in Spanish society. The ladies are very pretty. They all wear the high comb and the mantilla, and they partake much more of the swimming walk of the graceful Gaditana than do the Habaneras. Caraccas is also famous for another, and not quite so pleasing, though not nearly so dangerous peculiarity, namely, the number and energy of its fleas. They say that for every flea in any part of the world, there are ten at Caraccas. The philosopher, when kept awake during

the stilly night by these lively companions, would find some consolation in the knowledge that all

> "These fleas have other fleas,
> And smaller fleas to bite 'em;
> These fleas have lesser fleas,
> And so *ad infinitum.*"

I might enter into an interesting calculation as to the size of these lesser fleas. To the man not blessed with a philosophical turn of mind, and who has to get up at sunrise to travel all day, the consolation is small. However, I must do Caraccas, or rather our host, the justice to say, that I have suffered much more from fleas in England than I did at Caraccas.

CHAPTER XXII.

VALLEY OF ARAGUA—TUY—LAKE OF VALENCIA.

Jun 11*th*.—HAVING got our passports we started at about 3 P. M. for San Pedro, distant about six leagues. The first three leagues lay through the beautiful valley of Chacao. Everything bore the appearance of great prosperity. The road was as good as any in Europe. The hedges were beautifully clipped; hardly a foot of ground could be seen that was not in a high state of cultivation. The plantations were numerous and in good order, and the long chimneys and black smoke showed that even in this remote valley steam was rendering its thousand-handed assistance. We crossed and recrossed the Rio Guayra several times before we arrived at Antimano, some two leagues distant from Caraccas. We met several herds of wild cattle being driven towards Caraccas by the staneros in crimson or blue ponchos, mounted on high-peaked saddles, with their constant companion the lasso plaited into their horse's tail, and the long cattle spears in their hands. The cattle were magnificent-looking animals, and reminded me of the breed that one sees in the bull-rings of old Spain. Coffee is more cultivated in the valley of Chacao than any other crop, and it contributes in no small degree to the beauty of the scenery. After leaving Antimano, and crossing for the last time the Rio Guayra, near the village of Las Ajuntas, we commenced the ascent of the mountain Higuerote, a lofty range that separates the

valley of Chacao from those of Aragua. Owing to our having left Caraccas so late in the day, we lost the magnificent view of Caraccas and its lovely valley, backed by the mountain of the Silla and Avila. We continued ascending for about three hours on mules, clambering along a road that wound and twisted amongst gigantic rocks, and which had every appearance of being the dried bed of a torrent.

About 10 o'clock we began descending into a valley or basin in the mountain, in which was situated the village of San Pedro. We found the Posada shut, and could gain no admittance. Dozens of muleteers and cattle drivers, wrapped in their ponchos, were sleeping under the shelter of the overhanging roof. After some difficulty, we made our way into some small outhouse, and here, wrapping our martial cloaks around us, we sought that repose which nature required, but which the fleas refused us. Next morning at 3 A. M. our faithful mozo roused us, and we found our mules already saddled. The morning was very cool, and a cloak was by no means disagreeable. As far as I could make out by the light of a most glorious moon, San Pedro must be a very picturesque and flourishing village. We continued ascending through a thickly wooded mountainous path for about three hours, when we found ourselves on the summit of the mountain, here called Cocuyzas. Here the scenery was truly magnificent. The road wound along the summit of the sierra, giving alternate views of the valley of the Tuy, with the distant valleys of the Aragua on the one hand, and the valley of Ocumane bounded the snow-capped mountains that separate the valleys from the plains on the other. Out of the main valleys narrow little glens

wind, and nestle up into the mountains, till lost to view. Their rounded sides, and the emerald brilliancy of nature's carpet with which they were clothed, reminded me of some of the glens of the Cheviots.

That morning's moonlight ride along the summits of the sierra of Las Cocuyzas, was certainly one of the most enjoyable I ever remember. It was almost like magic, when as the sun began to approach the horizon, the perfect stillness of the forests beneath was gradually broken by the occasional note of some early riser of the winged inhabitants, till at length, as the day itself began to break, the whole forest seemed to be suddenly warmed into life, sending forth choir after choir of gorgeous plumaged songsters, each after his own manner to swell the chorus of greeting—a discordant one, I fear it must be owned —to the glorious sun; and when the morning light enabled you to see down into the misty valleys beneath, there were displayed to our enchanted gaze zones of fertility embracing almost every species of tree and flower that flourishes between the Tierra Calente and the regions of perpetual snow. It certainly was a view of almost unequalled magnificence. We were riding amongst apple and peach trees that might have belonged to an English orchard, and on whose branches we almost expected to see the blackbird and the chaffinch; while a few hundred yards below, parrots and macaws, monkeys and mocking birds, were sporting among the palms and tree-ferns of a tropical climate.

I consider that this view alone would repay any lover of fine scenery for all the troubles and risks of crossing the Atlantic, for I do not know where one to be compared with it is to be found in Europe. The

dress of the cattle and mule-drivers is very curious and antique, and reminded me of the dress of the Druids, in the opera of Norma. It consisted of a long white shirt or bed-gown reaching below the knees, and a very full pair of white drawers reaching nearly down to the ankles; they wear no shoes or stockings, and generally tie a handkerchief round their heads in the place of a hat. They are a fine athletic race, and the amount of fatigue they will undergo is quite extraordinary. We travelled from Caraccas to Macenedo, a distance of about 170 miles, in three days and a half, and our mozo kept up with us on foot the whole time; for, except one day, for about half an hour, when he cut his foot, he did not once get on the baggage mule; besides this walking fifty miles under the burning sun, he had to pack and unpack and attend to four mules whenever we halted. I believe some of the marches these men made, during the War of Independence, under Bolivar, carrying no luggage or commissariat save one head of Indian corn, were quite incredible. I think, as far as appearance and manner are concerned, they are the finest peasantry I have ever seen. Most of them are Venezuelan Creoles; born of Canary Island parents. Our guide was the most faithful creature I ever saw. He always slept in his poncho across our door, and would never lose sight of us or our luggage. On our arrival at Porto Cabello, we wanted to find him, to give him a good dinner, as his fare during the journey had been rather scanty. We could not find him for some time. At length he was discovered rolled up like a great Newfoundland dog on the top of our luggage, fast asleep; poor fellow! pretty well exhausted, I expect.

We passed innumerable specimens of that most graceful of all tropical productions, the arborescent fern; the stems of some of them must have been upwards of thirty feet in height. About 8 o'clock we commenced the descent of the Cocuyzas, into the valley of the Tuy at the foot of the mountain. We found the pretty village of the Cocuyzas situated at the entrance of a delicious little glen, down which warbled the waters of the Tuy. The *Venta*, in fact nearly the whole village, was shaded by one enormous zamary-tree, which to the dusty wearied traveller gave it a most enticing appearance; neither did it disappoint our expectations, for a cleaner room and better breakfast, better cooked and better served, I never wish to taste. This venta at Cocuyzas is most enchantingly situated at the foot of the mountain and at the entrance of the valley of the Tuy, which is there a mere glen; one side is entirely shaded by this enormous tree, and the other overhanging the Tuy, which with its rocky bed and thickly wooded precipitous banks, reminded me very much of some of the tributaries of the Tweed. The venta would be a charming place to stay at for a few days' angling in the Tuy, which I believe is very good.

We left the venta about 3 P.M., and after a delightful ride along the banks of the Tuy, which we crossed and recrossed innumerable times, we reached the town of La Victoria soon after dusk.

Off at four: the morning was lovely, and a view of the lake of Valencia, distant about twenty miles, in our front, and the hazy mountains of Cocuyzas towering in our rear, was very fine. Almost directly after leaving La Victoria the traveller crosses a low ridge that divides the valley of the Tuy from the

valleys of the Aragua. The waters of the Tuy find their way into the Caribbean Sea, whereas those of the Aragua belong to an inland system, all of which flow into the lake of Valencia. The valleys of the Aragua are the most thickly populated and the most highly cultivated of all the districts of Venezuela. The level of the valley is 2,000 feet below the valley of Caraccas, consequently the heat much more intense. Coffee is now the chief article of exportation from Venezuela, the fluctuating price of which has of late years been very injurious to the country. The berry grown is of a superior quality, and fetches a much better price than the Cuban or Brazilian coffee, though not quite so high as that grown in Jamaica. Some of the coffee and sugar estates we passed were on the largest scale, employing as many as 200 slaves, besides the same number of free labourers. A coffee plantation, either in blossom or when the berry is ripe, is the most beautiful culture in the world. The plant itself, with its regular shoots like a miniature tree, and red berries, is one of the most graceful shrubs that I know; and as between the rows of coffee-trees they usually plant plantains and bananas, these with their enormous clusters of yellow fruits and their leaves of some six or eight feet in length, add greatly to the effect, and give the country the appearance of a large fruit garden. Moreover, as it is necessary to plant the mango and other large fast-growing trees, to protect the ripening berry from the deluging rains and scorching heats, whenever you pass a coffee plantation, even in the hottest day in the midst of summer, when the whole face of the country is parched up an unhealthy brown colour, the eye is continually

refreshed by the cool verdant appearance of these shaded gardens.

The road we were following was so well kept and so well wooded, and the hedges so neatly clipped, that I could hardly sometimes help fancying myself riding down some country lanes in England. We followed one lime hedge, which enclosed a coffee plantation, for upwards of two miles. It was the most perfectly kept hedge I had seen in any country; it was some four feet high and about three feet thick, and throughout its whole length, I don't believe there was a single flaw through which a dog could have forced its way. Several slaves were employed in trimming it. In fact, in this climate, where the growth of all inanimate nature is unceasing and so rapid, it must employ several hands continually to keep it in such beautiful order. The scent of the lime as we approached it from some parched country we had been crossing previously, was most delicious.

We met several herds of cattle on their way to Caraccas, driven by staneros with their spears and lassos; to a nervous lady who never passes through a field of domestic cows without some slight trepidation, the meeting three or four hundred of these wild gentlemen from the plains in a narrow lane would be far from agreeable. Breakfasted at Turmero, a neat comfortable little inn, with the prettiest *fille de maison* for a waiter that I had ever had the pleasure of being served by. After breakfast we continued our journey towards Maracay, distant about five leagues. The road for a considerable part of the distance lay through a deep sandy plain, from which the refraction of the heat was intolerable;

the vertical rays of the sun alone were powerful enough to broil a beefsteak, and altogether this was the hottest ride I ever remember. We put the large leaves of the castor oil plant into our hats, which were an immense protection from the sun. I had brought an old unbrella with me, and the relief and comfort was very great; and I advise all travellers in the tropics never to scorn the use of one when they get the opportunity.

Soon after leaving Turmero we caught sight of the far-famed Zamany del Guayre, and in about an hour's time arrived at the hamlet of El Guayre, from whence it takes its name. It is supposed to be the oldest tree in the world, for so great was the reverence of the Indians for it on account of its age at the time of the Spanish conquest, that the Government issued a decree for its protection from all injury, and it has ever since been public property. It shows no sign whatever of decay, but is as fresh and green as it was most probably a thousand years ago. The trunk of this magnificent tree is only sixty feet high by thirty feet in circumference, so that it is not so much the enormous size of the Zamany del Guayre that constitutes its great attraction, as the wonderful spread of its magnificent branches, and the perfect dome-like shape of its head, which is so exact and regular, that one could almost fancy some extinct race of giants had been exercising their topiarian art upon it. The circumference of this dome is said to be nearly six hundred feet, and the measure of its semicircular head very nearly as great. The zamany is a species of mimosa, and what is curious and adds greatly to its beauty and softness is, that the leaves of this giant of nature are as small and delicate as

these of the silver willow, and are equally as sensitive to every passing breeze.

Riding on towards Maracay we met some thirty or forty cattle drivers all with their inseparable lassos and spears, coming in from the plains to a fandango. They were a fine handsome looking body of men, and several of them remarkably well mounted. The love of gambling and dancing, so essential a part of the Spanish character, has lost none of its intensity in Venezuela, and these staneros from the plains think nothing of galloping fifty or sixty miles to a fandango or a gambling bout, where, having once commenced gambling, they are never content till they have lost every dollar, and very probably their next year's wages in advance, or been equally successful in clearing out their adversaries. Although the Venezuelans retain that great blemish on the Spanish character, the inordinate love of gambling, it is not accompanied by that ungovernable passion of revenge and a lust for blood, as is the case in Mexico and Peru; and from what I could hear, quarrels are matters of very rare occurrence at these *réunions*. In fact, robbery and murder seem almost unknown, except during the strong political excitements arising from the continual revolutions. Although we were recommended to carry pistols, and did so for mere form's sake, mine were never loaded, and I doubt whether my companions' were so either.

The herds and cattle drivers of the plains are, I suppose, as good horsemen as any in the world; they use the most barbarous bits, saddles and spurs, like all the South American Spaniards. Stories and anecdotes of the miracles performed with the lasso are familiar to every one, but there is one peculiarity

in the use of the lasso in Venezuela which is not common either in Mexico or in the Brazils. The hide rope, instead of being fastened to the peak of the saddle, as is the case in those countries, is plaited into the horse's tail. I could never believe this till I saw it. It always struck me that it would either pull the horse's tail out by the root, or else throw him down; and so it would, but the horses become so cunning and so fond of the sport, that the moment the lasso leaves the hand of the rider, instead of stopping short, as I always imagined was the method, they gallop off at a slight tangent as fast as they can, when, if the lasso is round the leg, the slightest jerk brings the bull to the ground. So little actual force and so much knack is there in it, that many men will throw bull after bull with a mere jerk from the shoulder, without laying any strain whatever on the horse. Great misapprehension exists as to the distance the South Americans throw the lasso; seven or eight paces is a good long cast, and four or five not a bad average. A much neater sport than lassoing, and requiring more science, is the art of throwing bulls by the tail, which is termed *collear*, and the person who does it the *colleador*. The colleador, mounted on a good horse that knows his business, gallops close up to the bull, when catching hold of the tail he clenches it under his knee, and the horse darting off at right angles pulls the bull's legs from under him, and he comes to the ground with crashing force. This art of throwing bulls by the tail is all knack, and the slightest men generally make the best colleadors. They say that, as in bull fighting, there is a certain fascination in the danger, and though many lose their lives every year, it is a

favourite sport amongst the wild riders of the plains; and the reputation of being the best colleador of a district ensures the happy possessor the admiration of his comrades and the prettiest partners at the fandangos. An expert colleador will, by himself, throw and brand fifty wild cattle in a day. The cattle are branded with pitch two or three times a year. The taming of wild horses is much the same. An active man and a good horseman will jump on a wild horse without bridle or saddle, armed with nothing but his spurs, and gallop across the plain kicking the poor beast until he begins to flag, when he slips off, and catching hold of the tail gives the horse a heavy fall. A few falls of this kind will tame the wildest horse, and convince him that the thing upon his back is his master.

On a large hato, or cattle farm, on the plains, there are perhaps between 40,000 and 50,000 head of wild cattle, from eight to ten thousand of which go to market or are consumed on the farm annually. In the markets good oxen fetch from seven to eight dollars, from 30*s.* to 2*l.* a head. A hato of this magnitude would require perhaps ten or twelve staneros or herdsmen, and some two or three hundred mules and horses for their use. As we were riding through some scattered thickets, I had dropped rather behind, when suddenly a bull rushed violently out of a thick bush, and with muzzle to the ground and tail erect made straight at me. A capsize appeared inevitable, as my mule seemed of so phlegmatic a nature that she would never have quickened her pace till she felt the bull's horns between her ribs; however the ground was sandy and soft, and, like Cæsar, I was calculating the most advantageous manner of employ-

ing a military cloak with a red lining that I had on the pummel, when the bull suddenly stopped within about twenty yards of me, and retired into the bush again. Whether he had been animated by any hostile intentions towards me, or whether he had been violently prodded in the stern by some other invisible bull which caused his sudden rush, I cannot say, but it was rather trying to one's nerves, and the utter want of all sympathy with my anxiety to leave so dangerous a neighbourhood displayed by the mule was very aggravating, and as I could not by any means induce a quickened progression, I had to retire from the suspicious bush at a foot's pace, expecting every moment to hear my friend galloping up in my rear.

The rest of the road to Maracay lay through herds of wild cattle, some of which eyed us in the most suspicious looking manner. We passed one poor brute that seemed in the most frantic state of suffering, tearing up the ground with its horns and trying to bury its nose in the ground; it was most probably bit by a wasp or hornet. Found a very comfortable posada at Maracay, kept by a Frenchman from the Basque provinces. He had lately married a Spanish girl of about fifteen; she was the most perfect specimen of a South American beauty I have yet seen; olive complexion, eyes as black as the sloe, but yet quite soft, and that rare beauty, long eyelashes both on the upper and lower lid. Just as we arrived, the landlord's son by a former marriage, a boy of about six years, put his shoulder out, and we had to assist at the setting; the poor little fellow seemed to suffer a good deal, and I don't think the medico was a very expert practitioner.

CHAPTER XXIII.

VALENCIA—PORTO CABELLO—VENEZUELA—BLANCO.

A VERY characteristic performance took place whilst we were baiting at Maracay. Hearing a great clattering in the street, we ran to the window, when we saw a wild bull rushing at full speed up the street, glowering round for something on which to wreak its fury, but as it was the hour of siesta, fortunately nobody was out. Just as he was approaching our window, a young man mounted on a white horse dashed up alongside him, and throwing his lasso over his horns, galloped on for dear life, the bull close to his horse's quarters, and making frantic exertions to overtake him. They proceeded thus for some two or three hundred yards up the paved street; the leading horseman then turned up a bye street, dragging the bull after him; when directly they were out of the town, another horseman dashed up behind him, and catching by the tail, threw him over *à la colleador*, and in rather less than no time his legs were fastened with lassos, and he was left for execution. It reminded me of seeing the bulls from the mountains driven through the towns of Cadiz and Malaga, on their way to the Plaza de Toros.

I ascended a small hill on the rear of Maracay, to get a view of the lake of Valencia. I think, without

exception, it was the most beautiful view I had yet seen. On the one hand lay the fertile valleys of the Aragua, beautifully wooded and irrigated, and studded with magnificent plantations of coffee and sugars, extending to a distance of thirty or forty miles, and bounded, on all sides but one, by lofty mountains; and on the other the lake of Valencia, varying from four to ten miles in breadth, studded with numerous islands and glistening in the sunset, lay extended before one, stretching away further than the eye could reach, and bounded only by the cloud-capt mountains of Merida. I have seen many persons who, having seen both the valley of Mexico and the valleys of Aragua with the lake of Valencia, preferred the latter. The view from Maracay rather reminded me of the view of the lake of Geneva from Villeneuve. We left Maracay in the cool of the evening, and slept at a small wayside venta. Dozens of muleteers, almost naked, were sleeping round the door. The landlord, a true Spaniard, began about the perfections of his horse immediately we entered, and although we were tired, insisted upon our going out to see it by moonlight.

The next day, about 10, we reached the plantation of Macando, the property of a Mr. Gooling, and one of the finest in the country. Here we were most hospitably received, and pressed to remain, with the Spanish compliment of the "house and all that it contained being at our disposition." Ever since leaving Surinam I had been suffering from a severe cold, which annoyed me very much, and on casually mentioning the circumstance to our hospitable host, he said he could immediately cure it; and sending up

a tub of cold water, with two or three gallons of new rum, told me to bathe myself well in this strong grog. It was certainly an improvement on the simple cold-water system, and it effected a most complete cure. I doubt whether it would have been a very safe remedy for a British tar afflicted with slight cold and fever. There is nothing new in this world; all the new discoveries, as they are termed, have been known years and centuries before. Hieroglyphics introducing animal magnetism are found on the Egyptian sculptures, and so far from hydropathy being the new discovery that its disciples affect to believe, it is an undoubted fact that it was well known and practised by the ancients; and it is related that, when the Emperor Augustus was on the point of death, he was unexpectedly restored to health by Antonius Musa, by the mere application of cold baths and cold drinks. For this cure he was enriched by Augustus and the senate, and himself and all his profession were in future exempted from taxes. I hope no exemption of the kind will be made in favour of English doctors. It would induce too many to take up the profession; and I think it only fair they should pay, and pretty highly too, for the liberty of killing her Majesty's lieges without coroner's inquests.

Macando is one of the finest estates in the whole of Venezuela. There are about three hundred slaves residing on the estate, and very nearly the same number of free labourers. The number of slaves in the republic of Venezuela does not altogether amount to more than ten thousand. Slavery is almost entirely confined to the Tierra Caliente; in the moun-

tainous districts and table lands the Creoles can work perfectly well, and the proprietors prefer free, as being cheaper than slave labour. No "ebony" is imported at present from the African coast; the price of the article is not sufficiently high to repay the risk. During the War of Independence, the Creoles, dreading a slave rising at the same time that they were fighting the royal troops, liberated all the slaves under thirty years of age, by that means hoping to render them allies; and I believe the plan succeeded. The liberating all up to a certain age was very invidious, and there were some very distressing cases. I heard of one poor fellow who was only one day passed thirty, and so missed his destiny. However, from what I could see, I fancy this emancipation was only a temporary bending to unavoidable circumstances, and that, directly the danger was past, the masters resumed their rights. This must be the case, for although there are comparatively few slaves in the republic, yet as the revolution took place thirty years ago, there should not properly be a slave under sixty in the country, whereas you see them of every age, from three years and upwards.

Here one sees the different feeling with regard to the prejudice of colour that exists between the Spaniards and the North Americans. A free-born American, however poor he might be, would rather cut his hand off than work in the company of slaves; in fact, the chances are he would be lynched by his fellow-whites if he did so: whereas a Venezuelan Creole or a Canary Island emigrant will work in company with a slave without any sort of compunction.

After dinner we rode down the shores of the lake, distant about two miles. The view from the shore, of the mountains on the opposite side, was very pretty. So beautifully clear is the atmosphere in this country, that we could see the church at Maracay with perfect distinctness, although at the distance of upwards of twenty miles, and on our level. Mr. G—— told us some horrible stories of the deadly nature of the snakes in Venezuela. There is a snake called *el tigre*, which, from all accounts, is nearly as instantaneously fatal as the bush-master of Guiana. The islands in the lake of Valencia are peculiarly infested by deadly snakes, and there is one called the *manovta* that is said to come down to the shore directly it hears the grating of a boat's keel! (A *smart* snake that!)

An American we met related an anecdote of this snake, which, if true, was very frightful. He had gone in a canoe one night with a father and son, intending to shoot deer next morning on one of the islands in the lake. When they reached the island, the son, notwithstanding the repeated warnings of his father, jumped out; but he had no sooner done so, than he gave an agonized yell, and fell back; the father immediately sprung out, but was also struck by the snake, but not so severely. They got the young man into the boat, but he swelled to a horrible size, and, bleeding at eyes, nose, and mouth, died in less than half an hour. Our friend and the father now set out on their return to Valencia with the dead body. A storm had in the meantime arisen, and they were in the greatest danger of being capsized. The old man was suffering fearful agony from

his bite, and had nearly gone out of his mind; and the narrator described in graphic terms the horrors of his situation, in a frail canoe in a dark night during a severe storm, and the momentary expectation of being capsized, his only companion being a mad father lamenting over the body of his dead son. No very enviable position certainly!

The next day we received most pressing invitations to remain at Macando, which indeed we were all very anxious to do, but time was short, and we had a good deal to see before the hurricane months should drive us out of the West Indies. At last, as we could not make up our minds contrary to our inclinations, we determined to draw lots, the odd man to decide; the lot fell on C——, and he not being able to make up his mind, tossed up again, to see whether we should go or remain. The fates decided that we should depart, and so we did, with many and sincere regrets. On bidding farewell, Mr. ——— paid us a regular Spanish compliment, saying, that "our visit was like a flash of lightning, which, by its brilliancy and sudden disappearance, only made the darkness more visible." At Macando I saw great numbers of those beautiful little parroquets, the Kepi-kepi. They are smaller than an English sparrow, of whose domestic habits, by-the-by, they appear to partake largely, living near the habitations of man, and sitting chattering on the house-tops in quite an orthodox way. Although easily tamed, they are so delicate that few, if any, have crossed the seas to Europe.

From Macando we rode some seven or eight leagues to the city of Valencia, the capital of the

western province of Venezuela. From its position at the foot of the valley of the Aragua, and on the shores of the lake of Valencia, and with an excellent coach-road running down to Porto Cabello, the most secure harbour in the Caribbean Sea, Valencia ought properly to be the capital of the whole republic; and so I imagine it will eventually become. Valencia is the birth-place of the banished President, General Paes; and as at Barcelona and Caraccas the natives are in general supporters of Monages, so in Valencia they are to a man partisans of General Paes. We had some very good letters of introduction to several Englishmen and Spaniards, amongst others to Signor Bolivar, the nephew of the Liberator.

Valencia is a fine town, with rather a handsome cathedral. Its population is somewhere between 20,000 and 30,000. It was the first city built by the Spaniards, who did not force their way into the valley of Caraccas for nearly half a century after they had conquered the province of Valencia. As Caraccas is said to be still the head-quarters of fleas, so Valencia was formerly the stronghold of ants. All the first structures of the Spaniards were undermined and destroyed by ants; and at length it was determined by the authorities to petition some saint to become their patron against the ravages of these inveterate opponents. St. Augustine, a sanctified priest of the order of St. Francis, consented to accept the office, with the title of "Aboyado contra las hormigas." Since that time, as in the case of the sharks at La Guayra, the ants have ceased to annoy the faithful Catholics of Valencia.

We fraternised considerably with Signor Coll, the landlord of the venta, an expatriated Carlist

from Catalonia, in consequence of our having toasted Ferdinando Quinto as the legitimate sovereign of Spain. He conceived a great affection for us, and swore "he would not lose sight of us till we had left *estas tierras infelices*, this rascally country and its inhabitants, and that he himself and his horse, the best in the whole republic of Columbia, would accompany us down to Porto Cabello." Being pressed for time, we had intended starting the afternoon after our arrival at Valencia, but the rainy season had now commenced in real earnest, and Madame Coll would not consent to her affectionate husband's travelling in such weather, consequently we had to remain till the next day. We spent the evening very agreeably in visiting several of the best families in Valencia, and making the acquaintance of several very pretty Spanish girls. The ladies of Valencia are said to bear the palm away from all the beauties of Venezuela, but I think I saw more pretty faces at Caraccas.

July 4.—The rain still continuing in torrents, and there being no great prospect of its clearing up for any length of time for the next three months, we started at 4 A.M. for Porto Cabello. Signor Coll, notwithstanding the reiterated prayers of his wife, insisted upon accompanying us. I thought it was rather a curious circumstance his having been seized with such a sudden affection for us, and I expected there was some other reason than the mere desire of being civil to some English strangers, that induced him to wade to Porto Cabello and back during the rainy season. I expect Madame Coll knew her *caro sposo* and his real motives better, and that her excessive desire for him to remain at home did not

proceed entirely from a fear of his getting cold. Valencia is nearly 2,000 feet above the sea, and the road descends with an easy declination down to Porto Cabello. The road follows the windings of the Rio Vermego nearly the whole distance of twelve leagues. As far as we could judge through the descending torrents of rain, the scenery was excessively pretty; the mountains on either side of the valley were very stony and barren, and in the shape and height reminded me of Tweedside above its junction with the Ettrick. We went a short distance out of the high road, to see a boiling spring that had broken out during the earthquake of 1812. The water was at boiling heat, and had a strong sulphureous smell.

The rain had made the road as slippery as ice, and our mules very nearly sat down several times; at length the poor old luggage mule, who was the most unsteady on her pins, made a desperate slide, and on recovering stood quite still. The muleteer went up to urge her forward, when he found her shoulder had shot out of joint, and the poor brute's foot was not within a foot of the ground. The mule was very old, and any hope of getting the shoulder in again was quite out of the question, so we left the mozo with her, with strict orders to cut her throat, and ourselves pressed on to the next village, where we procured a *burro* to carry our baggage into the town of Porto Cabello.

Porto Cabello, "the Port of the Hair," so called from the excessive snugness of its harbour, where a vessel may lie throughout the year moored only by a single hair, is a large straggling town, running some distance round a deep still bay, land-locked on

all sides, and with a narrow entrance of some half-mile long, and three or four hundred yards broad. The quays round this bay are excellent, and vessels of seven or eight hundred tons' burthen can load and unload alongside them with the greatest facility. For many years it was one of the strongholds of the buccaneers, and many are the orgies and atrocities it witnessed in those days. It is now, with the exception of La Guayra (which is in fact no harbour whatever, but a very unsafe roadstead), the chief shipping port of Venezuela. It is, without exception, the most unhealthy looking place I ever set eyes on, surrounded on all sides by fetid marshes and mangrove swamps; and how it happens that fever is not continually raging there I cannot make out.

We went on board the *Ariel* in the evening, and found all well, with some thirty or forty additions to the live stock, in the shape of parrots, macaws, monkeys, &c. The next day, after parting with Signor Coll, whom we rather alarmed by threatening to write and acquaint his wife of the real reason of his being so anxious to accompany us to the port, and shaking hands and giving some presents to our faithful mozo, the most honest and affectionate creature I ever saw, and who in his attachment to us during the short time we were together resembled that of a dog more than of a man, we embarked, and bid adieu to Venezuela.

June 18.—We got under weigh about 4 P.M. In reaching out through the narrow passage, the wind failed us, and in two minutes the current bumped us with pretty considerable force on the granite rocks under the fort. We got an hawser and kedge out from

the bows, but just as we had hove her off, the rocks cut the hawser like a knife. On we went again with greater force than before. We then got another anchor out astern, and after some little trouble got her off uninjured. The captain of a French vessel, who came off to our assistance, told us that, although there were numbers of persons lining the quays watching us, he could get no assistance whatever, but from the crew of a German vessel that was unlading.

It is a great pity Venezuela is so much out of the high roads of travellers, and that the inconveniences of getting at it are so great. It is, in my opinion, the most beautiful country, as regards climate, scenery, and productions, in the world. The inhabitants are intelligent, civil, and honest; and although there is no excessive wealth in the country, there is, on the other hand, no great poverty, and actual want is unknown, where beef can be procured to any amount for a halfpenny a pound, and plantains and bananas almost for nothing. The inns are excellent, and travelling perfectly safe. You may, on the sides of its precipitous valleys, in a few hours, ascend from the productions of the torrid zone to those of the frigid. You may, if you like, dine off beefsteak and potatoes, cooled down with French claret or real London stout; or, if you prefer it, you may, in imitation of Leo X. and the Emperor Vitellius, treat your guests on joints of monkey and jaguar, and have your *entremêts* of parrots' tongues and humming-birds' breasts, washed down with sparkling pulque, tapped from the graceful maguay growing at your very door. In fact, there is no luxury you cannot enjoy at a moderate expense. Servants are

cheap; and you can buy a horse for five shillings, though it will cost you fifteen to have him shod! The shooting on the stanos and in the mountains, according to all accounts, is very grand. The woods are filled with jaguar and ocelot, to say nothing of snakes, and the plains with deer and wild cattle.

If any kind fairy were to offer me the sovereignty of any part of the world out of Europe, with power to rule it as I choose, my choice would certainly fall upon Venezuela. And I am fully convinced it only wants a government strong and stable enough to ensure the necessary protection to capital and property, to render it one of the most flourishing countries in the world. I look back upon the few weeks I spent there as amongst the most enjoyable I ever passed; and if ever any opportunity was to offer of revisiting that delicious country, I should do so with pleasure. Any traveller wishing to judge for himself, has only to go by the West India steamer to St. Thomas, where he meets the sailing packet for La Guayra, which he reaches in four or five days; and with a few letters of introduction, or even without any, hospitality will meet him on all hands, and he need never feel a moment hang heavy on his hands.

The best months for travelling through Venezuela, including the plains and the low country about the upper waters of the Orinoco, and the Apuco and St. Juan's rivers, are from November to the beginning of May, when he can count upon dry weather. The country, except immediately on the coast, is very healthy, and the *calentura amarilla*, or yellow fever, rarely ascends beyond two, never more than four thousand feet above the sea.

CHAPTER XXIV.

BLANCO—ST. VINCENT'S—CARIBS—INDIANS—
PITCH LAKE—HOME.

As the westerly current along the north coast of South America runs at the rate of forty or fifty miles a-day, and as the prevalent winds are also easterly, the beat up from Porto Cabello to the windward islands is usually very tedious; consequently, although we had a good working breeze, we did not progress very fast, and did not fetch the Island of Blanco, or Blanquilla, though not more than 250 miles' distant, before the 24th. Blanco is a low, sandy island, some fifty miles in length, and about half that distance in breadth. We landed here, supposing it to be inhabited, but found only a small hut occupied by some six or seven Spaniards. Large herds of mules and horses are reared on this island of Blanco, but this year, owing to the continued drought, they had all perished, or were perishing. We walked into the interior of the island, and the sight that there met us was very painful. On every side of us, in all directions, cattle were dying in heaps, of starvation. Many that we passed were actually breathing their last, and in several instances it was distressing to see the skeleton foal trying in vain to procure nourishment from its

dead mother. The number of dead oxen, horses, mules, and donkeys, scattered in dead and dying heaps around, must have amounted to some thousands. In many countries the stench of such an enormous collection of dead animals would have been unbearable; but so dry was the atmosphere of Blanco, and so lean had the wretched animals become before death, that no decay had taken place, but the skin was stretched over their empty ribs like so many great drums. After shooting a few parrots and humming-birds, we left this scene of misery, and returned to the *Ariel*.

25*th*.—At sea.

26*th*.—Sighted Margaritta, and stood in to repair a split mainsail. We landed, and shot humming-birds and parrots,—not very noble sport. The humming-birds, flitting and hovering about the trees and flowers, are indescribably beautiful. Some species are little bigger than a hornet; they do not fly as other birds, but flutter as a butterfly from flower to flower, keeping up a soft humming noise with their wings. When feeding, they do not light on the flower, but hover about on all sides, extracting the honey with their long pliant bills, which are hardly bigger than a needle. At Margaritta I discovered a nest no bigger than a walnut, with two little eggs about the size of swan-shot. When I approached, the mother left the nest, but would not go further than two or three feet, and I might easily have caught her in my cap. As the nest and eggs of this very minute species are valuable to collectors of curiosities, I had great difficulty in inducing my companions to spare it; but as I had been the means of discovering it,

I thought myself bound to try my best to protect it. Some of the islands contain many more species than others; in Trinidad, for instance, eighteen different species are found, whereas in Barbadoes there are only four. The ruby and emerald crested hummingbirds, with their short head and breast, changing their colours with the slightest movement, are the most common. In Trinidad, the market price for preserved skins, not set up, is from 8*d.* to 10*d.* a skin.

We sailed from Margaritta on the evening of the 26th, and anchored off the island of St. Vincent on the 30th. St. Vincent is an excessively picturesque island, and as far as it is cultivated is very fertile; but the want of labour is felt there as well as in all the West India islands. St. Vincent is remarkable as being the only one of the windward islands where a remnant of that once savage and powerful tribe, the Charaibes of the Isles, is now to be found. At the time of the discovery of South America, nearly all the windward islands, Barbadoes, Trinidad, Tobago, St. Vincent, and others, were inhabited by a fierce race, called by the Pacific Indians of Cuba and Hispaniola, "Charaibe," which meant in their language, "warlike people." They opposed the Spaniards tooth and nail, and were by them nearly exterminated; their destruction was completed by the buccaneers, who treated them with the utmost cruelty, introducing bloodhounds for the express purpose of hunting them down. They succeeded to their hearts' content, and the miserable remnant now existing in the island of St. Vincent is all that is left of that gallant race. The Caribs of the main, though called by the same name, were

a much less warlike race, and like the Arawauks, the Chaymas, and the other tribes of the continent, only showed fight on two or three occasions. The Charaibes of the Isles are described as being a tall, handsome race, the men far superior to the women in appearance; and they had a tradition that their ancestors landed on one of the islands from the mainland, and attacking the inhabitants, killed all the males, but kept the women for their wives, a regular re-enacting the Rape of the Sabines.

It is far from improbable that they originally belonged to the fierce tribe of the Goahiros, that I have before mentioned as inhabiting the country between the lake of Maracaybo, and the Rio de la Hecha, and there maintaining their independence at all costs. Neither is it impossible that they were the ancestors of the Natchez of Florida, whose tradition of their ancestors having been driven in a perishing state on the coast of Florida I have before mentioned. The inhabitants of the Bahamas and Cuba mentioned to Columbus, during his first voyage, the existence of a fierce race further to the west; so that it is evident the Caribs must have made excursions to those islands. Natures so similar to each other, and differing so completely from all the other tribes, both of the islands and the main, as did the Goahiros and Caribs, argue some common origin; and the certainty that, if the tradition of the Natchez is true, they could have come from no other place than the islands, and, being a fierce race, it is natural to suppose they could not have come from the islands inhabited by a soft, unwarlike people; there is a kind of negative argument, that

they, too, must have been of the same warlike stock, and, in some of their expeditions against their gentler neighbours, have been carried by the gulf stream, or driven by winds, on the coast of Florida. I was very sorry I had not an opportunity of visiting this last remnant of a great nation, but I have no doubt they retain little of their former characteristics. I should have been curious to see whether they in any degree retain their former barbarous custom of compressing the heads of their new-born infants with boards, as is now done by the Flat-head Indians, on the banks of the Columbia, (rather a curious coincidence,) or when the custom was abandoned. The Charaibes bury their dead in a cowering posture, with the chin resting on the knees: this is also the practice of the natives of Central America, where their superstitions have not been interfered with by the missionaries; and in Yucatan Stephens found the corpses in that position in all the tombs he examined.

When the Caribs of the mainland were first discovered, slavery existed among them to a great extent; their wars were not bloody, as they seldom destroyed life, but for the sake of having a jollification. All the vanquished were sold as slaves, either amongst themselves, or to neighbouring tribes. The price during Raleigh's visit was very low; one of his men having bought eight girls for a common clasp knife. Slavery is at present unknown amongst the Caribs, or any of the tribes of the northern portion of South America.

We sailed from St. Vincent's on the 2d, and anchored off Bridgetown on the evening of the 3d;

On the 4th we sailed for Trinidad. The entrance to the Gulf of Paria is very grand. The mountains of Trinidad stretch out towards the mountains of the mainland of Paria, and I have no doubt that (in those days probably when Mount Abylus and the Rock of Gibraltar were one and the same) they were united. Some convulsion of nature has, however, destroyed all connexion, and riven them up into mountainous rocky islands, with perpendicular cliffs of some fifteen or sixteen hundred feet in height, separated from each other by deep channels, varying from half a mile, which is about the breadth of the smaller *boca*, to about seven or eight miles, which is the width of the channel between the island of Chacachacarreo, forming "El boca majore del dragon," or the Dragon's biggest mouth. Vessels bound for Spanish Town, or for any port of the island, enter the gulf through one or other of these passages. At the east end of the island the gulf is again connected with the ocean by the Boca del Serpiente, or the Serpent's Mouth, which, however, is too shallow for any but coasting vessels.

In consequence of one of the chief channels of the Orinoco opening into the Gulf of Paria, its waters are violently agitated, and pour out at both extremities, through the Serpent's Mouth and through the several mouths of the Dragon, at the rate of four or five knots an hour. During his fourth voyage Columbus, who had been for some days previously greatly alarmed by the swell and agitation of the water outside the island, owing to the mighty influx of the Orinoco, and the force of the equinoctial current flowing into the Caribbean Sea, both of

which causes he was in utter ignorance of; finding the waters of the Gulf of Paria rushing in two different directions, north and south, from the same spot, fancied that he had reached the culminating point of the terraqueous globe, (he did not know the earth was round;) and having reasoned himself into this belief, he soon began to conjecture that the terrestrial paradise must be at the highest point of the earth, and consequently could not be far off, and that he was the fortunate individual destined to discover it. However, like Commodore Rogers, he was disappointed. Trinidad is the finest island in the West Indies, after Cuba, Jamaica, and St. Domingo. It is in a pretty flourishing condition, and Coolie labour is to be had at from 8*d.* to 1*s.* a-day.

We went to see the Pitch lake, a district of about an hundred thousand acres, covered to any depth with pitch, which is in many places soft and seething. Many experiments have been tried, especially by the late Commander-in-Chief on the station, for rendering this pitch serviceable for "tarring" purposes; but it either has too much of one ingredient, or too little of another, and hitherto it has completely failed. Experiments are now in progress for extracting gas, which is to exceed all other gas in cheapness and brilliancy, and large cargoes have been forwarded to New York for that purpose; but I expect that, like the Irish peat, although it contains all the necessary ingredients of incalculable wealth, they are so blended together, the chemical analyses necessary for separating them cost more than all the profits arising from their intended applications are likely to cover.

Spanish Town is one of the prettiest of the British

West Indian capitals that I have seen, and the society, composed of Spanish, French, and English in nearly equal numbers, is very good. After spending four or five days there, and making some short excursions into the island, we set sail on the 9th of July for Old England. As the current was in our favour, we went out through one of the lesser bocas, but, as bad luck would have it, the breeze again failed us just as we were in the most ticklish part of the passage; and an eddy, which in these narrow passages have the force of currents, running six or seven miles an hour, carried us unpleasantly near the beetling cliffs, before a puff of wind enabled us to sheer off. If we had grounded in that strong current, it would have been a far more serious matter than merely touching off Porto Cabello, and I fear the good ship *Ariel* would have left her bones to whiten at the dragon's cruel mouth, far from the land of the leal. We sighted Ste Lucie and two or three more of the French islands, and passing out between St. Kitts and Barbuda, on the 14th we found ourselves clear of the squalls and currents of the islands; and with a fair breeze and a smooth sea, notwithstanding a calm of six days, we made the Scilly Lights on the night of the 29th day, and anchored in Cowes Roads at daylight on the 14th August, 1851, thirty-three days out from Trinidad.

THE END.

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